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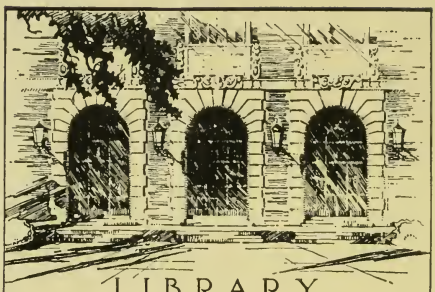

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VARGAS.

C. Baldwin, Printer,
New Bridge-street, London.

VARGAS:

A TALE OF SPAIN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1822.

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PREFACE.

In sending the following Tale into the world, it may not be improper to account for its appearance, by giving some information respecting its Author.

The late Mr. Cornelius Villiers was destined by his parents for the church, and having passed with credit through the University, was about to take orders, when a most advantageous prospect was held out to him by a distant relation, a respectable and wealthy merchant, established at Cadiz, who proposed to make him his sole heir if he would settle himself in his counting-house, and fit himself for the business of a commercial life.

Such an offer was not to be refused, and Mr. Villiers bid adieu to the University almost as soon as he had put on his Bachelor's gown.

He passed ten years nominally at the desk of his relation; but, in fact, in indulging his natural taste for literature, and in studying particularly that of Spain. He mixed freely in the best society of Cadiz and of Seville, and became equally enamoured of the Spanish character, and disgusted with the life of a merchant. This latter feeling did not escape the observation of his relative; who, in dying, left the greater part of his capital to a thrifty partner, whom he had added to his firm; excusing himself in his will from performing his promise to Mr. Villiers, by pleading that gentleman's evident dislike to, and consequent incapacity for, the

commercial profession. As a compensation, however, for the alteration which he had caused in Mr. Villier's prospects, he bequeathed him a moderate sum, more than sufficient to supply the usual comforts of a batchelor's life.

Upon the death of his relation, Mr. Villiers determined to make himself acquainted with the whole of the Peninsula; and he accordingly set out upon his travels, in the course of which he visited most of the principal cities of Spain and of Portugal, residing several months in each, whereever he found any inducement to prolong his stay. Although the study of human nature in general, and the national character of Spain in particular, were his great objects, yet he was not insensible to the beauty and variety of the face of that fine coun-

try, but took every opportunity of exploring its Sierras, and of visiting even the most unfrequented spots which seemed to promise a reward for the trouble of attaining them.

While continuing this progress through the land, he was diverted in its course by the commencement of the Peninsular contest. Alternately assuming the characters of a Spaniard and of an Englishman, he had an opportunity of following the current of that most interesting portion of the Modern History of Spain, with advantages that were possessed by few. He attached himself to the different armies, as the interest of their movements varied; and, in many cases, trusting to his Spanish accent and appearance for security against extraordinary danger, he ventured to throw himself into the line of march of the

French troops, that he might have an opportunity of witnessing the conduct of the invaders towards the unhappy and oppressed inhabitants.

From this interesting occupation Mr. Villiers was withdrawn, in consequence of becoming unexpectedly the inheritor of a considerable estate in his native country. He returned to England at the end of the year 1813; not however, until he had had the satisfaction of seeing the French armies driven entirely out of the Peninsula.

When settled upon his newly acquired estate, Mr. Villiers found it difficult to reconcile the wandering habits which he had acquired with the quiet life of an English country gentleman. Strongly impressed with the propriety of spending his income among the people from whom he derived it, he forbore to indulge his

inclination for travelling; and after devising many plans for the occupation of his time, he, at length, determined to draw his amusement from the stores of his memory, and to attempt to illustrate the history, and delineate the character and customs of the people, among whom he had passed so large a portion of his life, in a series of tales, each referring to a different historical period, endeavouring to draw a picture of Spanish manners, at the point of time to which each tale relates.

Although it was his wish and intention that these tales should ultimately be submitted to the public eye, yet no persuasion could ever induce him to publish them during his lifetime. It is not necessary to examine into his motives, for thus refusing to seek that public approbation of

his labours, which he certainly was desirous of obtaining; nor could such an examination lead to any satisfactory or just conclusion. It is, besides, a point not likely to be interesting to any but his personal friends, who will already have judged him by their individual acquaintance with him.

Mr. Villiers is now no more; and he has left his papers to the Editor, with a discretionary power to publish all, or such part of them, as in his judgment he may think fit. This was leaving them to a very insufficient and partial criterion. The friendship and affection of the Editor for the Author has been of long standing, and his admiration for the qualities of his heart may have induced him to make an exaggerated estimate of his talents. In this dilemma, the Editor has determined to publish the following Tale, as a

specimen of those which remain in his hands. The public will then have an opportunity of deciding whether they excite sufficient general interest to gratify the present taste, and whether the Editor has overrated the literary talents of his departed friend.

VARGAS.

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTORY.

El empezar es lo penoso.

SPANISH PROVERBIAL PHRASE.

Well begun is half done.

PARALLEL ENGLISH SAYING.

IT is a very difficult thing to begin to write a book. I remember when I was at Oxford, and in the habit of composing essays as a self-imposed task by way of practice, that I used to ponder for an hour upon my opening sentences; but having framed one to my mind, my pen would flow on without difficulty, from the impulse it had

acquired. In proportion as the writing of a book is a more important task than the writing of an essay, my difficulty in laying the first stone has increased. I had chosen my subject, and sketched out my plan—nay more, I had actually written several detached portions, which are to be dovetailed into certain parts of the work, and which lie upon my table, like stray counties belonging to a dissected map: I had besides gazed at my fire for the greater part of three days, with a countenance like that of Lord Burleigh, in the Critic; and with a full pen in my hand which longed to relieve the emptiness of the sheet of paper before me; after all I could not make a beginning to please me.

Yawning and despairing, I was about to give up my intention altogether, when my eye happened to fall upon

a bundle of letters, the hand-writing of which gave birth to an idea that inspired me with courage.

" Nature," I exclaimed, " no pompous exordium can ever have the effect of unadorned nature! The simple truth is the surest eloquence. My book shall begin to my readers, if I should ever have any, as it began to me. This letter, together with my own, to which it is an answer (and of which, by the bye, I had fortunately preserved a copy) will at once explain my plan, and serve as my apology.— This correspondence shall constitute my first chapter;" and here it is:

Letter from Cornelius Villiers to Don Juan Beamonte.

You congratulate me, my friend, upon the acquisition of fortune, and you take it for granted that it implies

an acquisition of happiness. I am not ungrateful for the blessings which surround me; but, strange as it may appear, I am very much puzzled to know how to enjoy them. I have passed eighteen years of my life in reading that many-volumed work of nature, the mind of man, but in a country very different from the one which I now inhabit. To have access to her vast library, I have been a constant wanderer for the last eight years. Some atheists tell us that our organs are gradually generated by their application, and not that the application arises from the existence of the organ. According to this method, my roving disposition has made wings to my mind, and I would fain fly away and range over the perilous pinnacles of the Pyrennees, the Sierra de Guadarrama or that of Morena, or perch upon

the pleasant flat roofs of Seville or Cadiz. But as my wings are clipped, they are not only useless but burdensome to me, and I am anxiously looking for the period when, according to the same law which engendered them, the habit of sitting still shall have worn them away.

One of the most considerable inconveniences which I find to be the result of my transplantation to this soil is, that by throwing me into a new literary as well as social world, I can obtain no sympathy in those studies and pursuits which have hitherto formed my principal enjoyment. There are well informed and even literary and scientific men amongst my neighbours; but not one who has an idea that Spain ever produced any thing worth reading, except Don Quixote. The name of Lope, and sometimes

that of Calderon, are mentioned as Spanish poets; but all that is known of the genius of either is its fecundity. Herrera, Mendoza, Luis de Leon, and even Garcilaso de la Vega and the Argensolas, are all unborn in England. Nor have the prose writers been more fortunate than the poets: even in the department of history, in which Spain has been so abundant in eminent writers, Mariana is the only author who is ever heard of here. The best informed of the English know nothing of the early chroniclers, and never heard the names of Zurita and Morales. The delightful old naïve chronicles of Lopez de Ayala, that of the Constable Don Alvaro de Luna, and that of the Conde Don Pero Niño, which we used to con over together with so much gratification on the polletillo in the orange bower at Cartuxa;

all these are undiscovered mines to the readers in England.

What appears to me most extraordinary is, that with all the desire of information which well-educated Englishmen possess, and with the heart-stirring interest which Spain has so lately excited, there should still exist so much ignorance of her former history, and so little curiosity about it. Charles V. is indeed known, but he is principally talked of in his imperial character. Every body has heard of his son Philip; but they have heard of him only as a bigot who opposed the Reformation in Flanders, and invaded England. A history of his reign has been published, which is a very excellent history of the Netherlands during that period, but nothing more. Indeed, when I see the paucity of historical information respect-

ing Spain which exists in this country, I feel almost inclined to turn historian myself; to cull the flowers with which the extensive garden of Spanish history abounds, that I may present them as a rare bouquet of exotics to my countrymen.

You would naturally suppose that the number of young men of family and education who have served for a considerable time in the ever-memorable war which has given you your liberty, must at once both have imparted to their fellow-countrymen a desire to become acquainted with the character and manners of the Spaniards, and have been able, in some measure, to gratify it. But you are not acquainted with the English. Proud, and justly proud of their political preponderance and of their great moral and intellectual advancement,

they turn at once from a state of civilization which appears to them to be inferior to their own, and have not the patience to examine it more closely. They too often injudiciously deprive themselves of many opportunities of information, and produce national enmity by contemptuously assuming their own superiority, and neglecting to pay attention to the feelings and prejudices of foreigners amongst whom they reside, especially when there are a number of them together. This feeling it is which has formed a serious obstacle to a knowledge of Spanish manners finding its way into England. You will hardly believe that whole crowds of young English gentlemen have marched and countermarched from the pillars of Hercules to the Pyrenees, without gaining even a tolerable knowledge of the Spanish

language, and, what is worse, without being ashamed of their ignorance.

You see, therefore, that in acquiring a large addition of what are called the goods of life, I am thrown out of the market for those mental commodities with which I have for so long a period been occupied in storing my magazines, and upon the free circulation of which I consequently depend for enjoyment. A clever cotton merchant may be a very stupid trader in wine, and I am settled in a port where there is no demand for *my article.* This mercantile metaphor would rather seem to have flowed from the counting-house quill which I used to wield of old, than from the wild goose feather that has indicted my latter epistles to you. To continue it, however, let me put you in mind, that as a merchant is always

happy to receive an order for an article of which he cannot otherwise dispose, so your letters, which have ever given me pleasure, will in future afford me a much greater degree of gratification, since they will give me almost the only opportunity I shall possess of dilating upon my favourite topics.

* * * * *

Letter from Don Juan Beamonte, to Cornelius Villiers, Esq., in reply to the foregoing.

Seville.

The picture you draw, my friend, of the ignorance of your countrymen upon the history and literature of this magnanimous nation, astonishes me and excites my compassion.—What! are the enlightened English unacquainted with the succession of glori-

ous achievements which have raised the Spanish name to its acme of greatness, from the Aragonese conquest of Naples, step by step, up to the never-to-be-mentioned-without-unspeakable-admiration * contest with those darkest sons of Satan, the French, and in which those very English have themselves borne so conspicuous and generous a part? Have they no knowledge of the poets that adorned the reign of John II, nor of the reign of Lope de Vega, that adorned the time of Philip III? But why do I allow my astonishment to overcome my feelings of friendship, which would rather induce me to rejoice that it is reserved for my dear *Correvillas* † to

* I have translated this letter literally, lest my readers should imagine it to be a fabrication of my own, as a manœuvre for the commencement of my book. C. V.

† Any of my readers, who may be versed in

remove the mist of darkness from the minds of so estimable a people, and to lay before their dazzled understandings these new—these transcendant treasures.

Where is thy active and bustling genius, *O Corre!* that was wont to find occupation for every hour, to fill up even the chinks and corners of time when it was passed on the banks of the Betis? Thy patriotism and thy leisure conspire to point out to thee the task that is appointed for thee. Thou art destined to be the telescope through which England shall examine the stars of Spain. Begin directly,

the Spanish language, will easily perceive the resemblance between this appellation which it has pleased my jocose friends in Spain to bestow upon me, in consequence of the many towns through which I have rambled, and my more serious and ostensible name Cor. Villiers. This nicknaming is a way they have in Spain. C. V.

and set forth the constellation that illumined the court of John II; translate the Chronicles of Pedro Lopez de Ayala, and the poems of Juan de Mena, as its stars of the first magnitude.

But, seriously, does not the combination of your large share of unappropriated leisure, with the want of information upon Spanish subjects in those around you, suggest a remedy for the evil you complain of? I think that the vivacity of your imagination is against your undertaking the graver office of an historian, but there are departments in literature in which that vivacity will prove an advantageous qualification. What think you of introducing my countrymen to yours, by making them acquainted with some of the minuter portions of our history, in which the application

of our institutions is shown, and the national character developed? You know that there are abundance of chronicles giving the most minute detail of individual occurrences at almost every period since Alphonso the Wise; choose some of these; and if you think that these alone would not possess sufficient interest in a foreign nation, give the rein to your imagination, and interweave the fictitious underplots of the secondary characters upon the real adventures of the heroes; this will afford you an opportunity of painting our manners and character in various points of view, and cannot fail of conveying information concerning us, as well as exciting interest for us.

There are so many of the minute and authentic legends to which I have alluded, that you have a great field

for selection. I remember how forcibly our interest was excited when we read the relations of Antonio Perez together, and how undauntedly we persevered in the task of collecting the sense from that most abominably printed, and worse spelt edition, published at Geneva, which, thanks to the defunct Inquisition, is the best, if not the only one, of Perez's works, wretched as it is: surely his story must interest every body. But I do not presume to select a subject for you—I only entreat you to pitch upon one for yourself, and to set to work as soon as possible. I shall long to hear that you have determined to execute this plan.

* * * * *

There is no necessity for me to copy the rest of my friend Don Juan's

letter. The reader who is aware that "mighty volumes rise from trivial things," will have seen the foundation of the work on which he is about to enter, and has, no doubt, already given me credit for my candour in resigning the merit of the idea to another, when I could so easily have retained it for myself. By the bye, as this may probably have produced an impression in my favour on the mind of the reader, I think that I had better take advantage of it, and begin my story at once; for I cannot divest myself of a nervous anticipation that my *opening sentence,* even though it be in the second chapter, will require a preparation of good humour.

CHAPTER II.

I have been i'the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence; all's in anger.
SHAKSPEARE.

THE good citizens of Zaragoza, in common with their brother Spaniards, were wont to take their midday meal literally at midday, in the year 1590, to which period of their history the reader is about to be introduced. Two hundred years have altered the domestic arrangements of the Spanish housekeeper, and delayed that important event in the day for three hours; and that their dining hour is no later, may, perhaps, be considered by some shrewd calculator to concur in authorizing the opinion of the friends of po-

litical liberty, that the Spanish nation is still two centuries behind our happy England in point of civilization; for at the rate they have gone since the end of the sixteenth century, it would just take them two hundred years more to arrive at our civilized dining hour of six in the evening. As the custom of dining at twelve o'clock was universal throughout Zaragoza, it became a natural consequence that the streets and public walks of that city should be nearly as tranquil at midday as at midnight. It might be imagined that the overpowering heat of the meridian sun in a climate like that of Aragon, would have been sufficient to produce this tranquillity in the streets: either cause was powerful enough for the effect; and as both combined to produce it, my comparison of Zaragoza

at midday, and Zaragoza at midnight, must have been fully justified.

Another cause lent its aid to prolong the repose and quiet of the city. As the people were in the habit of devoting the first hour of the sun's decline to their more substantial meal, they generally gave up the second, and a good part of the third, to the proper digesting of it; to assist which they usually slept. The *siesta* being quite as habitual, and consequently as necessary as the dinner, it happened that from twelve o'clock until three the city was perfectly still; the business of its inhabitants rested for a time; there was a temporary suspension of all intercourse; so much so, that the appearance of a passer by in the street, if it would not excite suspicion of his intents in the mind of a

casual observer from a window, could hardly fail of producing surprise.

It was this "stilly hour" of day that was judged the most proper for the execution of a design, which those who attempted it were aware could not be performed without danger, in the face of an injured, irritated people, bold and courageous at all times, and particularly jealous of their chartered and long preserved liberties and privileges. The Inquisitors knew how slightly their baneful Upas tree had taken root in the free, and yet uncontaminated soil of Aragon, where there had been little preparation from the iron hand of despotism to fit it for the nourishment of such a plant. They knew also, that in violating the sacred prison of the *Manifestacion*,*

* The *Manifestacion* in Aragon was a privilege nearly similar to that secured to the British

they were destroying the very bulwark of the liberty of Aragon—the only security for her freedom; that they were tearing the very seal off her charter; and they were well convinced that the people thoroughly understood the importance of the post which they attacked. There was danger, therefore, and they proceeded with caution.

subject by the Habeas Corpus act. Any person, either actually in durance or fearing to be so, might demand *manifestacion;* in which case he was immediately imprisoned, or rather secured, in a place more resembling a palace than a prison, until his cause should have been legally examined in whatever court it might have been instituted, and his sentence pronounced and approved. If any punishment should have been awarded to him, he was then delivered over to the proper authority to enforce it; but if he should have been acquitted, he was set at liberty, having in either case enjoyed personal security from tyranny, oppression, or torture, all of which were incompatible with the Aragonese Constitution.

The Marquis of Almenara, the hidden main spring of the ministerial machine that was working at Zaragoza, invented and set in motion by the crafty Philip, had been seen in the morning to go into the Aljaferia, at that time the palace of the Inquisition; whence, having directed the movements of his visible agents, he retired to his own house to wait the event. Scarcely was the silent hour of twelve arrived on Friday, the 24th of May, 1590, when the Inquisitors despatched, at the same moment, two deputations. One of these, composed of a superior officer of the tribunal, and some alguazils, went to the Justicia of Aragon,* to demand the body

* The Justicia of Aragon was the supreme judge of the kingdom, elected by the people, and possessing a power equal to the king himself, who was bound to consult the Justicia in all doubtful and difficult cases, and to abide by his

of Antonio Perez, a *Manifestado*, then confined as such; which demand they made in consequence of his having become amenable to the tribunal of the Holy Office, for certain crimes against the faith, &c. The other deputation consisted entirely of alguazils, who were desired to proceed

decision. He was the guardian of the liberties of the people, and under the control of the general Cortes only, as an appeal lay from the decision of the king's judges to him. He had three *Lugartenientes*, or deputies, any one of whom was vested with his authority and power during his absence, and all three together formed his council. I have used the original word *Lugarteniente* because there were other and distinct magistrates, called deputies, in the government of Aragon, and because the word *lieutenant*, which seems to translate it, has not, in fact, its full meaning. *Lieutenant* is completely translated by the Spanish word *teniente*. The addition of *lugar* seems to increase the power of the word to express the extraordinary privileges of these officers, and I can find no term in English to convey this sense.

immediately to the prison of the Manifestacion, and to make the same demand to the jailer, stating that they possessed the authority of the Justicia for so doing, as well as that of the Holy Office. The Inquisitors considered that by this means they might become possessed of the prisoner before the jailer could be put upon his guard, should the Justicia peremptorily refuse their demand, as they had reason to suppose he would; and the future discussion of the point would be of little consequence to them, after they had succeeded in their ultimate object; on the contrary, should the Justicia accede to their wishes, they would only have anticipated by a few hours the execution of his orders. They were little aware of the tremendous and overwhelming force of popular feeling when excited by tyranny,

irritated by aggravation, and raised to its highest pitch by an open and violent infraction of the dearest safeguard to the liberties of the people.

The plan was executed by the alguazils with the greatest despatch and success. The jailer of the Manifestados, either frightened at the extensive power of the Inquisition, or perhaps prepared by its bribes, appeared not to doubt the truth of the statement made by the alguazils, and immediately delivered up to them his prisoner, whom, with their best speed, they conveyed through the gates of the city to the Aljaferia, where the anxious Inquisitors were waiting to hear the success of their scheme. As Perez passed through the low massive Moorish portal of that ancient palace of the infidel monarchs — when he heard its gates close upon him, and

he felt himself in the power of the Inquisition, before whose secret tribunal any trial which he might undergo would, he knew, be but a mock form, he felt that there was no more hope for him even though he trod the ground of Aragon. He reflected upon the tortures he had undergone at Madrid, and anticipated with horror the too great probability of their repetition here; for although it is a fundamental law in Aragon that the torture shall not be inflicted within its favoured limits, yet in the dark dungeons of the Inquisition, never lighted by the bright sun of that happy country, it was in vain to hope that its laws would be respected.

Antonio Perez was that unfortunate minister who had been exposed for ten years to all the persecution which the envy and malice of his enemies

could suggest, fostered by all the encouragement which disappointed rivalship and the humiliation of conscious guilt could prompt his royal master to afford them. When, at last, the promise of the king had proved false, and his sacred justice and honour had both been violated, to stretch the limbs of his victim upon the rack, Perez effected his escape from the prison into which he had been thrown, and hastened to Aragon, there to claim the right of manifestacion, and to lay his cause before his countrymen for judgment.

The nature of the prison of the Manifestacion, meant for such persons only as threw themselves into it to escape the violence or injustice which they dreaded in more secret or more tyrannical prisons, precluded the possibility of rigour, or any thing more

than a sufficient restraint of personal liberty. Manifestados of any consequence were well lodged and treated, and their friends in all cases had unrestrained access to them. The publicity and popularity of Perez's cause rendered it a point of emulation amongst the inhabitants of Zaragoza to pay him attention in his imprisonment. Persons of all ranks crowded to visit him, to testify their sense of his injuries and their wishes for his welfare.

Amongst others was one who had made frequent visits to Perez in prison, had seen him much alone, and had entered into all the interest of his situation. He went by the name of Bartolomé Agreda; a solitary and melancholy man, totally unknown in Zaragoza, at which place he had but lately arrived, but giving himself out

as an Aragonese by birth, who had passed the greater part of his life in the other kingdoms of the Spanish monarchy, and was now returned to his native city. This short account of himself was all that could be extracted from him by the curiosity of an old lady in whose house he had resided since his arrival at Zaragoza, and who had exhausted all the suppositions of her imagination without falling upon one tale that was more likely to be true than another. He was uniformly silent unless when spoken to, and then he answered the most necessary questions by monosyllables, leaving all others unnoticed, except by a look of melancholy and fierceness combined, which had the effect of repressing all impertinent or unnecessary conversation. No one knew how the greater part of his time was spent,

for he was generally abroad; but for that portion of it during which he remained in the house where he had taken up his abode, he was either occupied in reading some books which he had brought with him, and which were in a language unknown to his landlady, or else he remained fixed in one unaltered position, as if wrapt in the contemplation of his own thoughts; and they always appeared to be of a painful nature from the stern and suffering expression of his countenance.

It will not be considered extraordinary, that so singular and unsocial a being should be looked upon with something more than curiosity by the gossips of Zaragoza in 1590. There was hardly a crime which Señora Engracia and her select *tertulia* had not supposed her poor lodger to have committed, as the total want of data upon

which to form any judgment left to their imaginations the choice of any of the sins that ever were anathematized by a pope; there was no misfortune, however melancholy and romantic, which these worthy descendants of Eve had not conjectured might have befallen him, whenever a gleam of the better feelings of our nature induced them to look upon him as an innocent or an injured man. Of the various possibilities that had been started respecting the stranger, each individual of the society of Señora Engracia gave credence to the one which pleased her best; but they almost all agreed in one point, that he certainly must hold correspondence with beings of another world; whether with the fairer or fouler order of spirits they had it not in their power to determine; for all

they knew of him was negative, and they could neither accuse him of any thing which would authorize their looking upon him as a member of the lower world, nor could his conduct give them reason to suppose that he was connected with the higher.

His person was of a nature to add considerably to the awe which his manners inspired. He was tall, and though thin, his form had the appearance of uncommon strength; in walking, his long stride and firm step impressed those who looked upon him with an idea of power and activity; his features would have been remarkably handsome, but that there was an expression of earnestness and almost wildness in his look arising from his eyelids being frequently on the full stretch; and the habitually descending curve of his lip showed at once

that it was unused to the smiles which might unbend it. Upon the whole, there was enough of beauty in his countenance to command admiration, and an expression of restless uneasiness, and of melancholy, that could hardly fail of exciting interest and pity.

Since the arrival of Antonio Perez at Zaragoza, a considerable alteration had been discovered in Agreda. Instead of remaining perfectly silent during the time of meals, and appearing not to hear a word that was spoken, he listened attentively to all that was said upon the subject of the imprisonment, which occupied the tongue and thoughts of every being in the whole city. He asked questions concerning the affair, though without giving his opinion upon it; which, however, was sufficiently easy to be discovered from his conduct.—

He visited Perez frequently, and formed a close intimacy with him; the inference, therefore, was, that he completely coincided in the general opinion of his fellow-citizens, and that he participated in the feelings which that opinion excited.

Either Agreda had some secret reason for keeping himself private, or he disliked the bustle that the intercourse of business produced in the streets, and which was much increased by the agitation of the public mind at this moment. His usual hour of visiting Perez was about the siesta time, when he might pace the deserted streets unobserved. On the day on which his friend had been kidnapped from the prison of the Manifestacion, he went to pay his accustomed visit at about one o'clock. He inquired at the door for Señor Antonio Perez.

"He is not here," said the jailer.

"Where is he then?" asked Agreda.

"At the Aljaferia, Señor."

"The Aljaferia!—The Inquisition! impossible! Is he not a Manifestado?"

"He was, Señor," said the jailer, "but he is now delivered over to the Holy Tribunal by order of the Justicia."

"Wretch!" exclaimed Agreda, "you shall answer to the Justicia for such a slander on his sacred title. Treachery! treachery! Aragon is betrayed!" and with these words he passed along towards the palace of the Deputation.

The Justicia of Aragon, upon the demand of the officers of the Inquisition, had immediately summoned one of his Lugartenientes, the first that he could find, and repaired with him to the consistory in the palace of the Deputation. They were there anxiously

discussing the important subject of this demand, when Agreda suddenly entered the room. The Court of the Manifestacion was open to all the world; and Agreda had pushed by the alguazil who attended at the door, and now stood unannounced in the presence of the Justicia and his Lugarteniente. Their surprise at his abrupt appearance prevented them from speaking at first; and before they had sufficiently recovered themselves to ask what he wanted, he stepped forward to the table, and placing his hand upon it, demanded in a firm tone whether it was by order of the Justicia that Antonio Perez had been delivered over to the officers of the Inquisition.

"*Has been* delivered over!" repeated the Justicia; "is he not, then, in the prison of the Manifestacion?"

" He is not," said Agreda, " and I demand of you, Señor Justicia, *the reason* why he is not there?—Why an Aragonese has been robbed of his birthright? why the sacred prison of the Manifestacion has been violated to throw a victim into the hope-forsaken dungeons of the sacrilegious Inquisition?"

The boldness of this speech, and the vehemence with which it was delivered, recalled the Justicia to a sense of the dignity of his high office; and he asked who he was that dared to hold such language to the chief magistrate of the kingdom of Aragon.

" I am an Aragonese," exclaimed Agreda, " and my words are the words of all Aragon; they proclaim the injury that it has sustained, and call aloud for the defence of its rights, and the punishment of those who have infringed them."

The Justicia replied, that the care of the rights of the people of Aragon was delegated to him, and that he should do his duty in defending them. He ordered the intruder, however, to retire, and leave them to deliberate on the proper line of conduct to pursue.

"Deliberate!" echoed Agreda;" can deliberation be necessary? The victim must be rescued from the chains that are thrown upon him, before they are too strongly riveted to be broken—Señor Justicia, the people have placed a sword in your hand, which it is your duty to wield——"

Here the Justicia grew impatient, and loudly called to the alguazil to remove this troublesome person.

"Then the people will wield that sword themselves," he added, "and

woe be to the head upon which it falls;" and he rushed out of the hall.

The rapidity with which an event of great public interest is communicated to every individual of a large population sometimes appears more like the effect of enchantment than of the human agency of words. The fears of the jailer who had delivered up Perez, induced him to confer upon the subject with the first persons he saw. The astonishment of these at such an infringement of their rights, only found its vent in communication. Families were disturbed in the peaceful siesta time to receive the intelligence. At first it travelled only from acquaintance to acquaintance, till, falling into the hands of more zealous patriots, it flew from house to house; every one being anxious to

disperse the information that the Manifestacion had been violated! that Antonio Perez was in the prisons of the Inquisition!

When Agreda left the palace, and entered the square in which it is situated, he found the stillness that had reigned there when he passed through it a few moments before, now broken by the footsteps of several persons hurrying to and fro, and the humming conversation of small groups which were collecting in different parts. He could be at no loss to account for this extraordinary alteration of the accustomed quiet of the hour. If he doubted its cause for a moment, it was soon placed beyond all uncertainty in his mind, by a stranger, who, hardly slackening his agitated pace as he spoke, said to him, "Friend, have you heard the news?

Antonio Perez is in the Inquisition!" and, without waiting for a reply, passed on.

The groups were continually increasing in size, and Agreda joined one, that consisted of a considerable body of people. He addressed them in a commanding tone, which drew the attention of the whole upon him.

After stating in a few words, but in an impassioned and impressive manner, that the birth-right of an Aragonese had been infringed; that the Manifestacion was no longer inviolate; that Antonio Perez had been dragged to that palace of wretchedness, the Inquisition; he continued, "Do you not know where lurks the poison that destroys the health of this free state? Have we not a veiled viceroy, who, like a coward, dares not use his power

in the light of day, but puts his foot upon us in the dark?"

"The Marquis of Almenara," said a man near him, "I saw him go into the Inquisition this morning; this is his work—death to the traitor!"

All who were around him caught the enthusiasm, and with one simultaneous shout they echoed him—"*Death to the traitor!*"

This shout rang through the Plaza; its effect was electrical; it not only collected into one body all the various groups that were talking together in the different corners, but as far as it was heard along the many streets that opened into the square, it set every being in motion, and was a guiding signal to the spot from whence it proceeded.

It was not long before the Plaza was crowded to excess, and although

in the confusion of sounds arising from the expression of resentment by so many voices, nothing could be gathered of their intentions as a united body, yet the hum of their talk was an awful and portentous warning of the storm that was about to burst.

Some one in the middle of the crowd said, " To the house of the Marquis of Almenara!" It was impossible that this exclamation could have been intelligible many yards from the spot where it was uttered, yet the idea communicated itself to the crowd, as if by magic; and almost at the same moment the whole body was in motion, rolling towards the house of the ill-fated nobleman.

When the Conde de Sástago, the former viceroy of Aragon, had solicited the permission of the King to retire from his office, it was the inten-

tion of Philip II to have placed one of his own courtiers in the vacant viceroyalty. The laws of Aragon, however, expressly declare that the ministerial offices of the kingdom shall be held by none but Aragonese born; and this was one of the privileges of which the people were most tenacious. The crafty Philip maintained his right of nominating a foreigner if he pleased, upon the very law which was intended to forbid it, and which declares that there should be no ministers of the crown in Aragon, who had not been born in it. The ministers of the crown are called, in this law, *royal officers* (*oficiales reales*); and the king declared, that as the viceroy was the representative of royalty itself, he could not be considered as one of its officers. He however consented to have this point decided by the proper Court in Zara-

goza; and, that he might not appear to throw all the royal influence into the scale, he promised that his cause should be carried on by a simple individual, not possessed of any regal authority. The individual he chose for his purpose was the Marquis of Almenara, who accordingly repaired to Zaragoza.

Although the Marquis appeared there in no public character, he entered the city with a royal retinue and great splendour. He gave feasts, to which all the public functionaries were invited; but the unpopularity of the mission with which he was charged was considerably increased by the suspicions which this conduct excited of his intention to corrupt their national authorities. It became at last to be regarded as disgraceful to visit him; and those who were not re-

strained by their own opinions, were prevented from so doing by the fear of sharing the public odium which was attached to all who held intercourse with him. In the mean time the Marquis was not deterred from executing the private orders which he had received from the King: it is true that a new viceroy was nominated *pro tempore*, but the Bishop of Teruel, who filled the office, was a mere tool in the hands of the Marquis, by whom every part of the government that emanated from the King was secretly directed.

As the expression of the public abhorrence towards the Marquis of Almenara had been open and general, he had long taken the precaution to keep his house in such a state of preparation as would resist any sudden burst of the popular feeling. The style of building of the better sort of

houses in Spain, renders them impregnable to any sudden attack; every house has double doors, both of which are of massive thickness, and are frequently studded with iron; and the lower windows of all the houses are uniformly guarded with strong iron bars. The Marquis, therefore, had little to add to the security of his palace; but his servants, who were numerous, were all armed and equipped for defence. Hence the torrent that was rapidly reaching his house, and which, nevertheless, had more rapid precursors to announce it, gave him no uneasiness as to his personal safety.

When the crowd of people who had tumultuously hurried each other along arrived before the Marquis's palace, they compressed themselves into a closer body, which, fitting itself to every angle and curve of

the surrounding buildings, seemed to be wedged into the spot that contained it. The tumult ceased for a moment; the people had acted upon no plan; had no defined object to combine their operations; they had been forced along by the impulse of their resentment, and drawn towards one point of attack by the universal feeling that their wrongs sprang from the Marquis of Almenara—that the evil lay with him. Thus far, therefore, every voice had been raised to denounce vengeance upon his devoted head; but now that they had reached the habitation of their enemy, what was that vengeance to be? and how was it to be executed?

These were questions which occurred at once to the mind of every one the moment that the crowd ceased to be in motion; and each seemed to

demand an answer to this unexpressed interrogation, by the look with which he regarded those who were nearest to him. There was a pause of comparative stillness for nearly a minute, which, as it followed the tumultuary shout of the mob when approaching, might have seemed like the silence which the hand of death imposes upon some wretch in the midst of insupportable agonies; but, as it preceded the sudden burst of "LIBERTY FOR EVER!" from thousands of voices at one instant, it might rather resemble the momentary delay of the executioner when, after the signal, he swings the fatal axe to concentrate his strength for the blow.

Much tumult and violence of expression followed this general shout; and these were infinitely increased by the appearance of the armed servants

at the windows, threatening at intervals to fire upon the mob. This threat excited the irritation of the people almost to madness. The effect which it produced, however, seemed for a time to be the very reverse of that which might have been expected. The mob appeared to be dispersing; it was certainly less numerous than at first; the street was no longer crammed so as to prevent the possibility of motion; it now displayed an undulating surface of heads in continual agitation.

The cause of this apparent dispersion was soon made manifest. The people had assembled at first from astonishment or from curiosity; as these passions were changed into resentment, they had followed its first impulse, and had been borne along by its influence; they had made no pre-

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paration for acting in any way, and were consequently unarmed; the threat of the servants of the Marquis, and the sight of their long muskets, recalled them to a sense of their own inability to act either on the defensive or offensive, and a great part of the crowd separated for the purpose of procuring what arms they could lay their hands on.

An individual, whose name was Gasper Burces, finding that they were not likely to get into the Marquis's house by open violence, resolved to have recourse to a stratagem, the most likely to succeed that could have been imagined. He ran to the Deputation, and met at the door one of the lugartenientes, Don Juan Gaco. Stopping him, he demanded instantly a manifestacion, to secure from violence the person of a pretended brother of

his, whom he represented to be confined in the house of the Marquis of Almenara. No pretence whatever can authorise the Justicia or any of his lugartenientes to refuse to manifest any one who may require it. Don Juan Gaco, therefore, gave a manifestacion, and Burces repaired to the Marquis of Almenara's, accompanied by a certain number of the alguazils.

Upon their arrival they demanded admittance in the name of the Justicia; but even this powerful name had no effect upon the servants of the Marquis, who repeated the threat that they would fire upon them if they attempted to enter. After vain endeavours to succeed, the alguazils retired, leaving the populace in a state of fury from this aggravated insult to the people themselves, and to their high representative. Shouts of "*Death*

to the traitor!" "*Antonio Perez for ever!*" "*Liberty for ever!*" "*He has resisted the Justicia—He has broken the manifestacion!*"—and new charges of different crimes, or different forms of the old ones, filled the air on all sides.

When the alguazils reported the resistance they had met with in the execution of their duty, and the clamourous state of the mob before the door of the Marquis of Almenara, the Justicia determined to proceed thither in person. A number of the noblemen and heads of the principal families of Zaragoza had assembled together at the palace of the Deputation, and offered to accompany him; this he refused, saying, that he was too much accustomed to be seen and to be respected by the people of Zaragoza to doubt for a moment not only that his

person would be secure, but that the dignity of his office would enable him to quiet the disturbance which had been excited. Taking, therefore,with him only two lugartenientes, and his two sons, Don Juan and Don Pedro de la Nuza, and preceded by some alguazils, he appeared in the midst of the tumult.

The great public importance of the office of Chief Magistrate of Aragon, and the excellent private character of Don Juan de la Nuza, who then filled it, procured him the greatest respect and deference wherever he appeared. In the present instance the people made way for him, breaking a free passage to the door of the house. As the chasm that was thus formed for him was filled up by the rushing multitude when he had passed, they redoubled their shouts and patriotic

cries. Some bold patriots, seizing hold of the sons of the Justicia as they went along, insisted upon their crying out, "*Viva Antonio Perez!*" "*Viva la libertad!*" to which they readily consented. Contrary to the expectation of every one, the Justicia was admitted into the house of the Marquis, but with such caution, and the outer door was reclosed with such rapidity, that before the semicircle maintained by the alguazils round the Justicia and his companions while demanding admission could be broken, the bolts were drawn and the bars were replaced, rendering the entrance as difficult as before.

While the clamours of the people and their fury continue to increase on the outside of the house, the reader shall have the privilege of accompanying the Justicia and his companions to

the closet of the Marquis, into which they were immediately introduced.

Don Iñigo de Mendoza, Marquis of Almenara, was a man of haughty demeanour, and of excessive pride. He would have died rather than submit himself in the slightest degree to the will of the people, when such submission would have borne the appearance of yielding to force. To a courage which would not disgrace the descendant from a long line of glorious ancestors, he added a punctilious jealousy of the respect due to his rank, and an overbearing exaction of it from all who approached him. In the midst of the storm which was raging around him, when the thunderbolt was already directed towards him, he was sitting, apparently unconcerned, in his closet; but there was an expression of the lip, and a lowering of

the eye, that might convey some idea of the contempt which he entertained for the mob which had beset his house, and his deep resentment at the affront which had been put upon the dignity of his rank, by the demands of the rabble. He stepped forward to receive the Justicia, and coldly asked him, to what he might attribute the honour of his visit, as he could not suppose it was to enforce the manifestacion of a person who did not exist.

" No, my Lord Marquis," replied the Justicia, " that tale has, I believe, been founded upon a false statement. It is to endeavour to restore peace to this distracted people, and to provide for your safety, my Lord, that I am come."

" My safety, Señor Justicia, is sufficiently provided for by my rank, and by the dignity and honour of my name

and ancestors; the conduct of their representative will be found to maintain this in every circumstance in which it may be placed."

"I doubt it not, my Lord, but in the midst of a popular tumult, all proper respect to rank is swallowed up by the overwhelming impulse of the moment. The Aragonese are a free people, and have long been in the habit of expressing their opinions of their rulers. They conceive themselves injured; whether they have reason for that opinion, this is not the moment to determine; but while that impression is upon them, they are not to be taunted with impunity. The royal lion himself were too bold did he attempt to withstand the raging course of a torrent which had burst its bounds."

"When a torrent bursts its bounds,"

said the Marquis, " *they* are to blame who did not carefully restrain its power by proper barriers."

" My Lord, I will not now seek cause for more strife, by diving to the bottom of the meaning of your words—"

They were here interrupted by the entrance of the other three lugartenientes who composed the court of the Justicia, and who, finding upon their arrival at the Deputation, where they had been summoned to a council, that the Justicia had repaired to the house of the Marquis of Almenara, had followed him thither. Not being able to penetrate the crowd in front of the palace, they had had recourse to a small private door which led into a garden at the back of it, and through this they had gained admittance.

The account which they gave of the

increased fury of the mob was of a nature very much to alarm the Justicia, and would have raised the fears of any other man than the Marquis of Almenara. The people, to whom every moment appeared an hour, were exasperated at the protracted stay of the Justicia within the house, when they expected that he would instantly have reappeared with the Marquis as a prisoner. Their frenzy knew no bounds when they found that this was delayed, and at length they had come to the determination to burn down the door, and set fire to the inside of the house, its stone front preventing the possibility of their doing this from without; in furtherance of their purpose they were actually collecting piles of wood, quantities of straw, and other combustible materials.

This intelligence seemed not at all

to disturb the Marquis, who deliberately called to a servant in waiting, and when he had entered calmly said—"If any attempt should be made to set fire to the door of my house, let every man in it discharge his musket at the same moment upon those who make the attempt, and be instantly ready to discharge it again whenever I may give orders."

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated the Justicia, as he turned to ask counsel of his companions. After a few moments' conversation together, they addressed the Marquis, and conjured him to consider the imminent peril in which he stood, and to leave the house privately by the back door, from whence, before his flight could be discovered, he might be a considerable way on the road to Fuentes de Ebro.

The Marquis looked at them with great scorn, and replied that he was descended from a line of heroes, of whom not one had turned his back upon danger: if his life were in peril, his honour was more so, and in dying he would leave the fame of his family as unspotted as he had received it.

"Señor Marquis," said the Justicia, "I have had the glory of serving with a hero, to imitate whose example can never reflect dishonour. I myself held the bridle of a horse at the private door of the palace of the immortal emperor, our late sovereign, when in the city of Ghent he was placed in danger by a less infuriated mob than that which calls for your life."

"In that I have less fear than Charles, I shall have more glory," said Almenara coolly, and turning from

them, he called to his servant to bring him his breastplate and casque.

While he was adjusting his armour, violent blows were heard at the outer door of the house, which were incessantly repeated for some time. The Marquis was leaving the room to give his orders, when the Justicia detained him.

" Since, my Lord, you are determined to rush upon the destruction that awaits you, your refusal to fly from this house allows me but one alternative. I must convey you under the protection of my office to the prison of the Manifestacion, where, until this storm be blown over, you will be safe."

" I will not submit to be a prisoner, except upon just grounds and by proper authority," said the Marquis.

"The command of the Justicia," said one of the lugartenientes, "*is* proper authority, Señor Marquis, and be assured that when protected by that authority, and conducted by him, you need not fear the insolence of the people."

The Marquis drew himself up as he replied—"I am a Mendoza, sir, and cannot fear."

"Infatuated man," said the Justicia, "we must save him, if possible, in spite of himself. Don Iñigo de Mendoza, by virtue of the authority of my office, I arrest you: you are my prisoner: I will answer for my conduct with my head, if necessary, to our sovereign Lord Don Philip. Friends," continued he, addressing his lugartenientes, "we will ourselves act the part of alguazils, and endeavour to

conduct him in safety to the prison of the Manifestacion."

The Marquis was about to reply, when several servants ran precipitately into the apartment, bringing the intelligence that the mob had succeeded in breaking down the outer door, and as there remained only the inner one, which was less strong, they might burst it in a moment.

"Then, villains," exclaimed the Marquis, "be you there to protect it; and above all, dare not, on your lives, again insult me by thus insolently approaching me."

The noise of the blows which the mob now applied to the inner door, and which shook the very floor on which they were standing, roused the Justicia into the necessity of immediate decision. He seized the Mar-

quis by the right arm, while Don Juan Toralba took hold of the left, and before he could offer any resistance, they were hurrying him down the staircase. They arrived at the bottom of it at the instant that the folding doors of the patio* gave way to the blows, the noise of which had resounded upon their ears as they were descending. In an instant the patio was overwhelmed by the torrent which had broken down its dam, while the walls echoed with the triumphant shouts of the multitude. With the greatest difficulty, and by reascending a few steps, the party resisted the force of the people. Don Martin de la Nuza, one of the lugartenientes, placed himself before the Marquis, and Don Gerardo Claveria behind

* A large open court in the centre of the house.

him; and the whole, surrounded by the servants, attempted to move forward through the crowd, repeatedly crying out—"Room for the Justicia of Aragon—the Marquis of Almenara is his prisoner."

The press at the door was so great, that it was only by using the butts of the muskets which the servants carried that their passage could be effected. This plan succeeded in placing them in the street, but it was fatal to them the moment they got there. The unbridled mob, many of them smarting from the blows they had received, tore the muskets from the hands of the servants, whom they dragged along in different directions. The lugartenientes, Martin de la Nuza and Claveria, were as little respected as the servants, and shared the same fate, so that in a very few minutes

after getting through the door of the house, the Marquis was left in the middle of the mob, supported only on the right and left by the Justicia and the lugarteniente Torralba.

The act of separating the servants from their master occasioned an opening in the crowd, which, though it was filled up as rapidly as the waves rush into the wake of a vessel, rendered it, for an instant, less difficult to pierce through than to stem the tide where its force is unbroken. The Justicia pressed forward through the momentary chasm, and as all who were behind followed him, those who were before took the same direction. Thus they passed rapidly along the street, but not through the crowd, of which they were the centre, and which moved with them in one united body.

The crowd having thus acquired its impetus, it was impossible to resist it, and they were hurried along with a velocity which, as it prevented the dignity of motion which his boiling but suppressed rage demanded, annoyed the Marquis much more than the blows which were continually levelled at him, or the revilings which pealed in his ears from all sides. Every push from behind which propelled him out of the steady pace which he endeavoured to support, produced a sudden flash of resentment from his eyes, which else maintained an uniform expression of the most sovereign contempt.

As the velocity of the crowd grew greater, they pushed on with increased force, till as they were pouring from the narrow street into the open *Plaza de Albion*, the Justicia fell, and the

mass of people who followed were unable to prevent themselves from passing over his prostrate body.

No one remained now to support and protect the Marquis but Don Juan Torralba, who, however, still continued to bear him along in spite of the blows which he every now and then received, and the deafening sound of the people's shouts of abuse and hisses. The fury of the populace took no other means of displaying itself than these until they arrived before the cathedral church of La Seo, where several of the personal friends of Antonio Perez were collected. Two of these, called Gil de Mesa, and Gil Gonzalez, drew their swords as the crowd approached, and forced their way to the object of the general resentment, crying out "Let the traitor die!—liberty for ever!"

"Hold!" vociferated Torralba, throwing himself before the Marquis; "in the name of the King, and of the Justicia, hold!—he is our prisoner!—we are responsible for his life—for his safety!"

"So you are for that of Antonio Perez," said those who were around him—"Let the traitor die!"

"Madmen!" cried Torralba, endeavouring to raise his voice above the din, "you are destroying the liberty you seek to insure."

Shouts of "*Muera el Traidor*," "let the traitor die," was the reply to his remonstrance, and he turned round only in time to support the Marquis, who must otherwise have fallen, as he received a dozen blows from the swords and knives of those who were nearest to him. This consummation of their revenge was announced by a re-

petition of the general shout of "Death to the traitor!" The ebullition of the frenzy which followed this shout produced a movement of the crowd, by which Torralba, supporting the Marquis, was pushed forward to a considerable distance. When the reaction of another part of this immense mass stopped the waving motion which it had acquired, Torralba found himself and his prisoner within a few yards of the gate of the common prison of the city.* Inspired by the sight of a place of safety, he made a strong effort, and succeeded in gaining the portal; where, placing the Marquis, now exhausted by loss of blood, fatigue, and the wearing impotence of his own rage, upon the ground close to the massive door, he

* Not the prison of the Manifestacion.

stood over him, and endeavoured to call the people to a sense of their madness, while he prevented them from approaching by the utmost exertion of his strength. Having in the mean time spoken to the municipal jailer through the little square grated hole in the door, he succeeded in procuring admittance, which was at length effected, though with the greatest difficulty.

The gate which enclosed the Marquis of Almenara from his pursuers, shut him for ever from the world, from which his haughty spirit departed without giving utterance to the intensity of his feelings. He was laid upon a bed in the jailer's apartment, where he lingered, without speaking, for some days, and then expired.

CHAPTER III.

Meanwhile they knock'd against the door
As fierce as at the gate before.

HUDIBRAS.

IN giving an account of the circumstances attending the death of the unfortunate Marquis of Almenara, I have forborne to distract the attention of the reader by relating the proceedings of another body of the people who, if not so numerous, were at least as tumultuous as those who assailed the Marquis's house.

When Agreda found the steady resistance which was opposed to the crowd at the Marquis of Almenara's, he anticipated that they would ultimately be frustrated, and prevented from obtaining, what he conceived to

be the only immediate object of their meeting,—an order for the instantaneous liberation of Antonio Perez; but a match had been put to the train which communicated with all that was ardent in the soul of an Aragonese: it blazed forth, and it was in vain to endeavour to smother the flame.

Agreda conceived that while this delay might be allowing the irritated feelings of the populace time to grow cool, the moments and the impulse might be more successfully employed in a direct attack upon the prison of the Inquisition, which might frighten the Inquisitors into delivering up their victim; or, if they refused to do this, an attempt might be made to rescue the prisoner by force. With this view he endeavoured to induce the people to enter into his plan, and so far succeeded, that, during the tem-

porary dispersion of the crowd to obtain arms, he was followed by several hundreds, as he led the way to the Aljaferia, gathering, in his progress, all the stragglers who were returning in that direction to the great rendezvous, and all those who were now first joining the popular meeting. Thus reinforced, this detachment, as it may be called, from the main body, was almost equally formidable if not equally numerous.

The Aljaferia was a large Gothic fortress, built for the residence of the Moorish monarchs upon their first establishment at Zaragoza. It had subsequently become the palace of the Christian Kings of Aragon, until shortly after the junction of that kingdom with Castille, when it was given to the Inquisition, to be the principal seat of the tribunal in Aragon, by

Ferdinand, who, by thus surrendering his own palace, hoped to increase the respect of the Aragonese for the Holy Office, which they at first had positively refused to receive amongst them, and which had at length been by no means firmly established by the united force of the royal authority, and the machinations and pretended miracles of the priesthood. It was situated about three hundred yards without the gates of the city, where it frowned in Gothic gloominess, surmounted by its many towers. It still bore the ancient character of defence, the loopholes made for the arrows of its original constructors having never been supplanted by embrasures for the cannon of its more modern inhabitants.

When the Justicia left the palace of the Deputation to repair to the house

of the Marquis of Almenara, the Conde de Aranda, and the Conde de Morata, hastened to the Aljaferia. Their object was to persuade the three Inquisitors, that the safety of the Marquis of Almenara required that they should make a voluntary sacrifice, and return their ill-obtained prisoner to the Manifestacion. The Archbishop of Zaragoza, who was first cousin to the Marquis, addressed a letter to the Inquisitors, containing similar advice, which arrived nearly at the same time that the two Counts were ushered into their presence. In the conference which followed, the Inquisitors maintained their right to the prisoner, and their determination not to give him up; spoke of the sacrilege of thus outraging the Holy Office, and of the effect of ecclesiastical denunciations; and ended by hinting the result of the royal dis-

pleasure which would follow such a course of proceeding as was proposed to them.

In the mean time the volcano, which had exploded in the Plaza of the Cathedral, was sending forth its torrent of lava through the gates of the city. The feelings of that part of the crowd which had been diverted from its original channel by the persuasions of Agreda, having been neither heightened by aggravated insult, nor abandoned to excess by gratification, had scarcely acquired any additional excitement from the clamour which they had raised, and which, by drowning his voice, frustrated the repeated endeavours of Agreda to inspire them into action. But when the triumphant legion came rolling towards them, unsatisfied with the sacrifice of their victim, flushed

with their victory, and fevered with the consciousness of the bloody immolation which had ratified it, the contagion was carried in their approaching shout, and the echo that was returned by the expecting crowd at the gate of the Aljaferia breathed the same spirit—flashed the same fire.

As the people issued from the city, and were rushing along the road to the Aljaferia, they overtook the carriage of the Bishop of Teruel, the nominal viceroy. This prelate, habituated to the quiet discharge of his clerical duties, and without capacity for any others, found himself suddenly in a situation in which he was sensible much would be expected from him, and this very consciousness produced so great a confusion in his brain that he was totally incapable of decision or action. When he was inform-

ed that the Marquis had been taken out of his house, he began to be alarmed for his own safety, and as a means of securing it, he ordered his carriage and proceeded to the palace of the Inquisition, where he considered that he should be in an impregnable fortress, and where also he would have the advantage of the advice, or rather instructions, of the Inquisitors how to proceed.

The fat, lazy mules, however, which had been accustomed to drag the ponderous vehicle that contained the representative of the royal person at a much more dignified pace than that which his present alarm would have desired, as they partook not of his fear, proceeded steadily along the road, in spite of the repeated directions of the Bishop to the coachman to go faster, and the coachman's translation

of these directions into the language in which he usually conversed with his mules.

The sight of the Viceroy's carriage on its way to the Aljaferia, was the signal for a general shout from the crowd, as it poured from the gates of Zaragoza. The yell went nearer to produce a compliance with the Bishop's directions than the translation of them into the Houyhnhnm language by the coachman; for the mules taking fright at it, set off at a full gallop, and would have reached the gate of the castle long before the mob could arrive there, had they not been encountered by an answering yell from those before them, which as suddenly put a stop to their flight as its antecessor had produced it. The distracted Bishop, palsied by the cry of the crowd, alarmed at the dange-

rous rapidity of the moving house which contained him, and hurt by the violent concussion produced by its sudden stopping, could not, for some time, collect his scattered senses: after a moment, however, to recover the effects of the blow against the front of the coach, he managed to descend into the road, where, in the excess of his agitation, he began crying out "Liberty for ever!—Antonio Perez for ever!" as loudly as his trembling voice would permit. The fastest runners of the mob, forming a kind of straggling advance to the compact body which followed, had by this time surrounded him, and, as if his safety consisted in the pitch of his voice, he continued his patriotic shouts at the highest scream he could command, adding occasionally—"I am not come among you as Viceroy!—I

am your countryman—I am only the Bishop of Teruel—respect my habit—my sacred office!"

Stunned by the cries of the surrounding multitude, which thickened every instant, the poor prelate hardly heard the sound of his own voice, and was totally unconscious of what he was saying. He gave utterance to the words prompted by his fears, which were by no means diminished when the crowd actually carried him forward with a motion almost as rapid as that which the terrified mules had given to his creaking carriage. They set him down, however, safe from bodily harm, at the gate of the old fortress which this tumultuous army were besieging. When the first burst of clamour had in some degree subsided, Agreda, who was close to the Viceroy,

with some difficulty made himself heard by his deafened Excellency, and found much more in making himself understood. At length he explained to him that the people who were assembled to assert their rights, desired not to obtain them by violence if it could be avoided, but that they were determined to have Antonio Perez restored to the Manifestacion, and that if the Inquisitors refused this, they must take the consequences. He desired the Bishop to go in and inform them that if they did not deliver up their prisoner in half an hour, the people would wait no longer, but that every beam that was supported by the walls of that palace should be reduced to ashes before sunset; and with these words, they pushed him through the postern, which, though scarcely large

enough to admit him, was the only entrance which those within would open to receive him.

The exhausted Bishop was carried more dead than alive into the presence chamber, where every means were taken to restore him. While he is recovering himself sufficiently to enable him to report the commission he had received from Agreda, in the name of the people, it may not be irrelevant to make the reader acquainted with the personages into whose presence he was introduced.

The tribunal of the Inquisition at Zaragoza was under the direction of three grand Inquisitors. As an equality of rank among persons holding the same office can hardly subsist in fact, so it will be found that the nominal and external appearance of it is only supported either by the avowed mas-

tery of one, or the secret and unacknowledged command which the superiority of mental power produces.—At the time of the imprisonment of Antonio Perez, the three Inquisitors were the licentiate Don Juan de Mendoza, Doctor Antonio Morijon, and the licentiate Alonzo Molina de Mediano. The last of these three, though a married man, and not in holy orders, had rendered himself General-Inquisitor at Zaragoza by the boldness of his opinions, the decision with which he expressed them, the undaunted courage with which he took upon himself the responsibility of any measure, and the unhesitating choice of the most daring means to accomplish it: these composed a character before which the common minds of his fellow inquisitors shrunk with awe.

The Conde de Aranda, and the

Conde de Morata were still in conference with these Inquisitors. The first was that unfortunate nobleman, whose subsequent fate was, perhaps, the greatest blot that stained the conclusion of this fatal insurrection, and the reconsideration of whose conduct at a more dispassioned moment, when years had passed over the heads of his attainted family, produced a public confession of their disgraceful injustice from the officers of the crown, and a tardy revocation of the sentence which confiscated his estate. He was deservedly popular in Zaragoza, where the antiquity and high rank of the house of Urrea* made the people look upon him with very great respect; and this attachment to his ancestors was increased to veneration towards himself, who united in his own person the

* His name was Don Luis de Urrea.

representative of this ancient house, and the legitimate descendant of the kings of Aragon, his mother being of the house of the Duke of Segorbe.—Being thus established in the hearts of his countrymen, accidental circumstances drew forth the warmest expressions of their affection for him; and his name had lately been made a kind of countersign to all those who disliked the Marquis of Almenara. The Count was engaged in a civil suit against a second wife of his father, Doña Juana Henriquez, sister to the Admiral of Castille, which was very much the subject of conversation in Zaragoza; the general opinion had all along been against her in this suit; but when the Marquis of Almenara was known to befriend her, and take up her cause warmly, the political feeling mingled with the private opinion,

and that which before was disapprobation became decided hostility. Besides this, the rank and family of the Conde seemed to constitute him the champion of the kingdom, and though the Marquis could boast of very antient pedigree, yet he could not display such a brilliant genealogy as that formed by the union of the houses of Urrea and Segorbe. This was a cause of unceasing contention and jealousies whenever they met; and the result of this combination of circumstances was, that the Conde de Aranda was the darling of the people, and that too, without having sought popularity, or wishing to place himself at the head of a faction; even while he felt and expressed the warmest sentiments of loyalty to Philip, as King of Aragon, sentiments that were in every point consistent with the

most jealous regard for the preservation of the chartered rights of the people, which he held to be the undisputed birthright of every Aragonese.

When a popular feeling is excited, it admits of no distinctions in its expression—it knows no medium in its display. Those whom the people conceive to be their friends they adore; while all those whom they look upon in the light of enemies are equally hated. The Conde de Morata, the other nobleman whom the Bishop of Teruel found with the Inquisitors, was a quiet sort of person, of whose character it would be difficult to say much. At the commencement of the agitation at Zaragoza he was neither the friend of the people nor their enemy; when the scales are even a feather will preponderate; and as soon as the people began to look up to

those who were exalted above them, to see from whom they might expect support, in the equal state of opinion with respect to the Conde de Morata, some political feather was flung into the scale which decided the character of the Count in the people's estimation. His name was soon classed with that of Almenara, a large portion of the odium attached to which he very soon acquired. Some visit to the Marquis after the popular proscription, or some rashly expressed opinion, perhaps in itself of little importance, had produced this effect, which was, in the end, of serious consequence both to the Count and to the people; for the former, finding his opinions had been decided for him before he had taken the trouble to decide for himself, was contented to remain on the side on which he had been placed, and there-

by saved himself from figuring in the melancholy catastrophe of this tragedy; while the latter lost by their hasty judgment the countenance and support of a noble family, whose power and fortune were of considerable consequence in Aragon.

The Bishop of Teruel being awakened to a conviction of his personal safety, gave utterance to many loud exclamations of thanksgiving for his preservation, and expressed his thorough conviction that it was by the miraculous interposition of the holy Lady of the Pillar that he had been rescued. He scarcely gave himself time to breathe after repeating his hurried prayer, and making his more hurried sign of the cross, but immediately began the delivery of his message with all the agitation which arises from the impression left by recent

danger, when contrasted with present security and the anxiety to prevent a recurrence of the former risk.

" Señor Molina—worthy Inquisitors—there is but half an hour left for consideration—not half an hour; but indeed no consideration is necessary. You must give up Antonio Perez directly. There is no alternative, unless you want to see these royal pictures" (pointing to the celebrated portraits of the Counts of Segorbe and the Kings of Aragon which hung round the walls); " unless, I say, you want to see them consumed with unholy fire, and yourselves, gentlemen—yes, yourselves, sacrificed, as, but for the miraculous interposition of the Blessed Virgin of the Pillar, I, who am her unworthy Minister, should have been sacrificed ; and, gentlemen, as the Marquis of Almenara has been sacrificed—"

" The Marquis of Almenara sacrificed!" said all his hearers at once.

In truth, the worthy prelate's tongue had outrun his intelligence; he had heard that the Marquis had been taken from his house by the mob; and as he did not imagine that any layman, however high his rank, could be so protected by the saints as one of their own servants, he made no doubt that the nobleman had been unable to support the rough treatment under which nothing but his ecclesiastical armour, the favour of the Virgin, had preserved the Bishop. When, however, this general exclamation seemed to call upon him for positive information, he became sensible of the hastiness of his conclusion, though not the less convinced of its justness.

" Yes, sacrificed!" said the Bishop; " I came here purposely to tell you that

he had been dragged out of his house by the lawless rabble, with the Justicia at their head."

"Your Excellency must pardon me," said the Conde de Aranda; "the Justicia is utterly incapable of exciting the people to any lawless act."

"Perhaps the act of heading a popular tumult is not considered lawless by the Conde de Aranda," said Alonzo Molina.

"I understand you, Sir," replied Aranda; "but I consider that my known loyalty to my King, and devoted attachment to the laws of my country, place me above the necessity of replying to every insignificant imputation against me. It might come better from me to suppose that they are ignorant of the laws of Aragon, who appear to set them at defiance by glaringly infringing them."

"Do you allude to us, the Inquisitors of Zaragoza, Señor Conde?" said Molina.

"If my arrow has hit your Excellencies," returned the Conde, "it matters little against whom the bow was drawn."

The knitting of Molina's brow seemed to portend a serious termination to this altercation. But the minds of the opponents were diverted from the channel into which they had fallen, by the increased tumultuary noise without the gates, and the clattering descent of a shower of stones and other heavy missiles into the great court of the castle, immediately before the windows of the hall in which they were assembled. This attack drew every body to the window, except the unhappy Bishop, whose nervous system was so violently acted

upon by the loud shouts which followed, and their concomitant recollections, that, starting up, he seized his coif, and began lustily to echo the "*Viva la libertad!*" "*Viva Antonio Perez!*" which resounded from the outside of the walls.

This nervous attack was, however, momentary; and, sinking back into his seat, the agitated old man repeated with a trembling voice, "I told you so—the half hour's past—they are setting fire to the doors—they are burning down the house!" and, giving himself up to the hysteric impulse which choked his utterance, he burst into tears.

The smile upon the countenance of Aranda, and the look of contempt from that of Molina, were repressed by the news which was brought them, that the mob, impatient of delay, were

preparing materials for the purpose of putting into execution their threat of burning down the doors, and of obtaining Antonio Perez by force.

There was a pause; it was interrupted by an Inquisitor, who declared that he saw no means of escaping the danger, but by complying with the demands of the people.

"Are we not in a fortress?" said Molina, while his eyes flashed fire; "and are we not provided with every thing necessary to hold out much longer than the reptile rage of this loathsome rabble will endure?"

"Be assured," exclaimed Aranda, "that you cannot oppose the unanimous will of a combined people; nor is the resentment of an outraged nation so short-lived, nor so despicable, as you imagine. There is but one line of conduct to pursue; restore Antonio

Perez to the prison of the Manifestacion, where I pledge myself that he shall remain secure; and the decision of the point between Aragon and the Inquisition may be referred to the proper Courts, whose sentence will have the same effect as if this unwarrantable act had not been committed."

The two Inquisitors, who were now more intimidated by the *hurly-burly* which filled their ears from without, than they were wont to be by the energy of their brother Inquisitor within, declared that their opinion perfectly coincided with Aranda's: the Conde de Morata joined them, and the mitred Viceroy raised his voice to entreat that they would no longer delay to execute what he proposed.

Molina's rage had been long rising, and had required his utmost self-com-

mand to restrain it: at the coalition thus formed against his fixed determination not to surrender his victim, this self-command totally forsook him, and a violent imprecation burst from him. He, however, almost immediately recovered the rein of his passion, which, for a moment, had escaped him; and, with eyes darting fire, which was envenomed by the contemptuous expression of his lips, he distinctly and deliberately protested against the proceeding, and declared the right of the holy tribunal to the body of the sorcerer Antonio Perez; then turning his back upon the assembly, he disdainfully left them.

He walked out of the hall by one door, whilst the entreaties and persuasions of Aranda and Morata, ably assisted by the riotous shouts of the mob, forced the remaining two reluct-

ant and trembling Inquisitors out at the other door. When the Bishop of Teruel saw them go with the intention of restoring Perez to the Manifestacion, he followed them with all the alacrity of youth, alternately giving praise to the Blessed Virgin, and expressing his joy by repeating the exclamations which had become so suddenly familiar to him, and which, in the complete confusion of his mind, were the only ones he could find ready upon his tongue—"Viva Antonio Perez — blessed be our Holy Lady of the Pillar—liberty for ever!"

When they got into the court-yard, the voice of the people pealed so loudly upon their ears that they could hardly hear themselves speak. This was of wonderful effect in hastening the desired end, for the sinking hearts

of the Inquisitors had been struck with a mortal fear at the separation of Molina from them in so important a step: they wanted some very powerful impulse to "screw their courage to the sticking-place;" and this was completely effected by such overwhelming shouts heard in the open air, the people being only separated from them by a wall which they almost expected to see give way to the pressure of the mass. The present awe overpowered for a moment that which they had felt upon quitting Molina, and in that moment the order for the restitution of the prisoner was given, and as quickly obeyed.

The Conde de Aranda then went to the postern. The moment he showed himself there was a shout of "Viva el Conde de Aranda." He

assured them that Antonio Perez was given up by the Inquisitors, but that he had pledged himself that he should be safely deposited in the prison of the Manifestacion. An universal burst of joy followed this communication, which continued till the rescued Perez, the Bishop, and the two Counts, were safe in the vice-regal carriage. The Bishop did not forget his patriotic cries, but was prodigal of them as he was helped into the coach, saying to those who were the nearest—"Did not I promise that I would bring him safe to you?"

They found it impossible to proceed in the carriage, as every individual of the crowd pressed anxiously forward, to see, and if possible to touch, their restored favourite. As all tended to the same point, it was in vain to endeavour to move. The car

riage, however, prevented the people from seeing Perez, and they consequently dismounted a cavalier who had joined the crowd, and, leading the horse to the carriage, they made Perez mount it. In this way they conducted him triumphantly to the prison of the Manifestacion, expressing, in the most clamorous manner, their sense of his injuries, and their joy at the victory which they had obtained.

When Antonio Perez was again in possession of his rights of safety as a manifestado, the people remained for some time before the door, and several of them began to call for the jailer, who had betrayed his trust in admitting the demand of the Inquisitors: but they were now rather a good-humoured mob, than an enraged one; many of them had retired to their

homes; and by the persuasions of the Conde de Aranda, and of several other persons of rank in the city, the whole were in a short time dispersed, so that before sun-set the town was perfectly quiet.

When any man, from an impulse of violent anger, has been induced to do that to which, in his calmer moments, he cannot but anticipate serious consequences, he is usually anxious and silent when he is first awakened to these reflections by the subsiding of his rage. This may, perhaps, account for the perfect stillness which reigned throughout Zaragoza on the night of the 24th of May, 1590. The fate of the Marquis of Almenara (for most of the people believed him to have died immediately) alarmed those who had formed part of the crowd, and astonished the few that had not: and

though, perhaps, there never were fewer sleepers in the city than on that night, yet there certainly never was less appearance of waking.

CHAPTER IV.

Good, my liege,
The day that she was missing he was here.
SHAKSPEARE.

ON the morning following the memorable 24th of May, the Señora Engracia was more than usually loquacious, whilst preparing the small cup of chocolate which constituted the breakfast of her lodger, in the hope of obtaining a full account of the part he had taken in the events of the preceding day.

" Terrible times these, good Señor, when people can't be protected in their houses by the good old laws of our ancestors: what will come upon us next, when one man can't be safe in the Manifestacion, nor another in his palace ?"

Agreda fixed his eyes on the brasero, and stirred his chocolate.

"I wouldn't have had a husband or a son in that mob yesterday, no, not to be venerated like the blessed Saint Engracia in heaven," resumed the old woman, turning mechanically, at the mention of her patron saint, to the coarse wood-cut glued upon the wall, and crossing herself devoutly.

Agreda was immoveable.

"It's much to have had an acquaintance amongst them."—She paused, looking at Agreda to see whether this side blow had roused him from his reverie; but finding that he paid no attention to it, she took courage and went on:—"Ay, and too much too to have had one who lives in one's own house leading them on." Another pause — but no reply. "They say that Gil de

Meza run his sword through the Marquis's body, but that he was not killed dead till some one struck him on the head—I wonder who that was!"

The old lady had all this time been occupied in twirling between the palms of her hands the handle of the mill that stirred her own cup of chocolate, which was boiling on the brasero. As it had now acquired the proper consistency and froth, she, for a few minutes, found other occupation for her instrument of speech than that of giving utterance to her thoughts. The thoughts, however, continued in the same chain, and were busied in planning how she could make Agreda disclose all he knew. After rejecting many circumlocutory ways of obtaining this information, which were suggested by her cunning, her propensity to talk overcame her prudence, and

she involuntarily put aloud the direct question which occurred to her mind:

"It wasn't you who knocked the Marquis on the head, was it, Señor Agreda?"

Agreda had been so much accustomed to hear the constant babble of her everlasting stream of words, that he had acquired the habit of letting them fall upon his ear unheard; as those who live near a church soon cease to hear the ringing of the bells: the interrogative tone, and the sound of his name, however, recalled him to the perception of her presence, and looking at her, he simply ejaculated—"What?"

Señora Engracia had been so astonished to find that she had let out so bold a question, that she was thrown into the utmost confusion. The countenance of Agreda, always stern

and unbent, and his voice low and round, now seemed to her the indications of strong anger; and his monosyllable so alarmed her, that she sat trembling without attempting to speak. Finding that she had nothing to say, Agreda silently put on his cloak, buckled his swordbelt, and left the house with the usual parting compliment.

Agreda left his landlady in dire consternation. She took it for granted that she had offended him mortally; and that he *was* offended, was, in her judgment, proof positive that her imagination had hit upon the truth, and that he was actually the murderer of the Marquis of Almenara. Then she wondered whether, as she had discovered him, he would ever return to her house. She appealed to her conscience whether she ought

to inform against him; and, in the discussion of a long list of similar questions, arising out of her wonderful discovery, her quick imagination was occupied until midday, when the olla was ready, and she looked out for her generally punctual lodger. The olla waited five minutes—ten minutes—a tedious half hour! Oh! now she was certain that she had been right: Agreda had been the Marquis's murderer, and would never again set foot in her house, for fear of detection.

Señora Engracia eat her dinner with unusual celerity; and to have attempted to sleep the siesta would have been quite useless; so she hardly gave herself time to return thanks for her meal before she repaired to the little apartment of her late lodger. She carefully rummaged over his valise, which contained nothing but a

few articles of apparel and several books. These books she examined very minutely, but could make nothing of them. She read her own language but indifferently, though she could read her missal through from beginning to end. After much consideration, therefore, she determined that these books were neither in Latin nor in Spanish—but here she stopped. The poor old lady's hair would have stood an end if she could have understood their titles only; for one was, "*the damning deceite of Popery and the worshiping of Images;*" another, "*the faithfull recorde of the life of Martin Luther done into English:*" it was well for Señora Engracia, therefore, that she could not understand these sacrilegious books. There was, however, something intelligible to her; a trifle which, small as

it was, awakened her most ardent curiosity: on the blank leaf of each book was written in Spanish "*Bartolomé Vargas, his book, London,* 1586." Her right-catholic eye observed that these words were not in any case surmounted by a cross, without making which symbol of faith at the top of the page no good Spaniard ever puts pen to paper.

While she was considering this important circumstance, and ejaculating the name of Vargas! Vargas! as not being able to reconcile it with her lodger's appellation, she was attracted by a call from a window of the opposite house in the narrow street in which she lived:

"Hist! hist! Señora Engracia!"

She raised her head, and saw her neighbour at the window.

"There has been an officer of the

Holy Office lurking about your house all siesta time: I have seen the man peep in at the window two or three times, and my husband knows him to belong to the Aljaferia; he has just turned the corner, and I took the opportunity to tell you: here he is again." She instantly retired from the grating.

The very name of the Inquisition struck alarm wherever it was announced all over Spain, but particularly in Aragon, where so much resistance had been made to its introduction. The book fell from the hands of the palsied old woman, and she remained motionless until a man appeared before the grating of her window and called her by name.

At the repetition of her own name she fell upon her knees, and in a loud voice began to repeat her Pater noster,

in which her fear, however, would not allow her to proceed. It was some time before her smiling visiter could get an answer to his question—"Is Don Bartolomé Vargas in the house?"

"Vargas! I know no such person —yes—no—he was—he's gone."

The questioner at last discovered that the person he sought was not there, and began to understand that he was not known by the name of Vargas. He left the terrified Señora Engracia with these words:

"I am not an enemy to your lodger, and am come to do him good; tell him, when he returns, that if he will be on the wooden bridge at ten o'clock to-night, he will meet a friend."

We will say nothing of the recovery of this old lady from her consternation; nor of the suppositions

and imaginations with which she amused herself for several hours; nor of her astonishment at the return of the man whom she looked upon as a murderer, and who, without having once thought of Señora Engracia, or of her question, had passed the greater part of the day with Antonio Perez. He had been detained in conversation, on the subject of his friend's imprisonment, much later than usual, and it was past ten o'clock before he entered the house; it was full half an hour more before he could collect from his bewildered landlady a clear account of what had happened. When at last he understood the message which had been left, he said not one word to Señora Engracia, but hastened to the place appointed.

A young moon was making a rapid descent towards the horizon, and its

rays cast a long shadow from the only being who was upon the low wooden bridge which stretched across the Ebro. The folds of his cloak were thrown across his body over his left shoulder, but not so as to muffle his face, which was turned towards the river as he leaned over the balustrade. From the fashion of his cloak and his cap he seemed to be an Aragonese peasant; and he was singing, in a low voice, a common country song.

The agitation of mind into which Agreda, or, as I may now call him, Vargas, was thrown by the discovery of his own name, was visible in the hurried pace which brought him to the bridge. The rustic appearance of the man who leant upon it, and his apparent unconcern at the approach of a stranger, induced Vargas to believe that it was not the person he sought,

and made him fear that he had come too late. He went across the bridge with the same haste with which he had reached it, but he returned with a slow and dejected step. As he re-approached the peasant, he found him still singing, but he had turned round and was looking towards him. Vargas listened to his song—

Oh! thou art a foolish stream,* old Ebro!
And a fanciful stream art thou;
What wizard could make you dream, old Ebro,
Of flowing the way that you flow?

Near the beautiful shores of the North, old Ebro!
Are thy whimsical waters born;
Yet thy current it rolleth forth, old Ebro,
And treateth those shores with scorn.

And many a league dost thou roll, old Ebro!
To kiss a sea more to thy mind;

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* The Spaniards say that the Ebro is a foolish stream, because it rises within a short distance of the Bay of Biscay, and yet it takes a journey of hundreds of leagues to fall into the sea.

But I that declare thee a fool, old Ebro!
In thy folly I leave thee behind.

On thy banks stands the place of my birth, old Ebro,
Where the maidens are fondling, and fair;
But I fly to the end of the earth, old Ebro!
And lose my heart foolishly there.

"A silly chap I am, too, for my pains," said the peasant, as he closed his song; "I know but one other as silly—a certain Don Bartolomé Vargas. Do you know him?"

"Who are you?" said Vargas.

"An hour's sucking in the breath of the Ebro when she's kissed by the moon may alter a man's voice a little, to be sure, or else I should think you might have known Perico, if he had but cried *arré* to a mule."

"Perico! How long from Seville? What of Doña Cornelia?"

"What of her, Seor? There's nothing of her left in her father's house;

the world says she's with your honour in France, and the world's the devil—but the devil lies, seeing that his wickedness knows very well that Doña Cornelia is not with your honour, but in a certain prison at Seville; for in the shape of an Archbishop, he took her there himself."

Perico's humour was insupportable to Vargas at this moment; he seized him firmly by the arm, and exclaimed, "I cannot bear this—tell me, in one word, where is Doña Cornelia, and what you know of her?"

"In Seville, Señor," answered Perico, in the same raised tone as that in which he had been questioned; then lowering it to a kind of a side voice, he added, "I wish I were as far from your grasp as she is; you must talk to St. Peter before you grasp her any more—she is in the Inquisition."

Vargas let go his hold; his own arm dropped; he stood motionless, with an expression of horror on his countenance, which, as the moon shone upon it, really alarmed the good-natured Perico, who, though incorrigibly light-hearted and light-tongued, hastened to give further information in fewer words than was his custom.

"The same day that you left the Marquis's house, Señor, Doña Cornelia was missing also; of course every body said she went with you, and so her poor old father thinks to this hour, if he's alive, poor gentleman. But she was taken from the house by stratagem or by force, Señor—the Archbishop;" and seeing the increased agitation in Vargas's countenance, he repeated "the Archbishop!" and left him to unravel the

mystery, having given what he conceived to be a sufficient clue.

Vargas's internal struggle continued for a considerable time. His agony at length found utterance in a strong exclamation, and taking two or three paces across the bridge, he struck his breast with his hand violently.

After a pause, he turned to Perico, who, by this time, was relieved from the feeling of alarm which Vargas's emotion had excited, and had consequently returned to the usual current of his habits—"Go on."

"Begging your honour's pardon, there's no going on when you once get into the Inquisition, and there the poor Señorita has got; so Lord help her, for the Archbishop won't."

"No fooling, Sir; how came she in the Inquisition—upon what charge —by whom?"

" Excuse me, Señor, these are questions I cannot answer; and if I could, I don't know that I would; there's an old proverb, you know, ' with the King and the Inquisition—Hush, hush!'"*

It was with the greatest difficulty that Vargas could collect any clear comprehension of the events which Perico had to relate. The natural good feeling which induced him to open his heart to Vargas was continually combated by the fear of involving himself in difficulties by the communication, and this fear occasionally presented itself to his mind, enrobed in all the terrors of the Inquisition. When urged by the impatience and evident agony of his auditor to proceed straight forward in his narrative, he would unluckily hit upon some link

* Con el Rey y la Inquisicion, chiton! chiton!

of dread and caution in the chain of his ideas, and suddenly checking himself, it was impossible to make him proceed. The habitual jocularity of his humour, from which he could hardly be forced by the most serious circumstances, contributed to make his tale unintelligible to Vargas, and increased the torments of suspense which he endured.

After a conversation of two hours to obtain the information which might have been given in ten minutes, Vargas went away in a state of mind which it would be difficult to describe, and of which it would be quite useless to attempt to give an idea to the reader until he becomes more initiated into the sufferer's secrets.

At day-break he was several leagues from Zaragoza, proceeding with all the despatch of an ambling post-horse, on the road to Andalucia.

CHAPTER V.

Ay me! what perils do environ
The man that meddles with cold iron.
HUDIBRAS.

WHOEVER has travelled a long journey with a heavy heart, and been forced to put up with a chattering unsympathizing companion, may form some idea of Vargas's state of mind when he drew near to Seville. Post after post from Aragon to Andalucia, had he endeavoured to repress the communicative loquacity, or the inquisitive curiosity of the guide of his way, and the guardian of his horse or mule, as the case might be. Every *mozo de posta*, (a term which I must translate *postboy*, for want of a better word, although there is nothing in common between a postboy of Eng-

land and a mozo de posta of Spain, except the feeding of their animals:) every postboy conceived it to be a part of his duty, and by no means a disagreeable part, to entertain the traveller by the way, and would as soon have thought of tying his horses' feet as his own tongue. As Vargas found that he had such countless tormentors to appease, and that as soon as he silenced one another arose, he prudently gave up the endeavour, and abstracted his thoughts entirely from his varying guides. The neglected postboys finding themselves unattended to and unanswered, turned their conversation to their beasts, who both paid attention, and answered by obedience to their commands. At large towns the traveller was mounted upon a decent sort of Rosenante, which set off at an habitual amble beyond the power

of spur or whip to increase; and his guide, mounted upon the better animal of the two, took the lead by the length of his horse. In smaller villages, or where the relay was stationed at a solitary venta by the road side, the utmost accommodation which the traveller could expect was the use of a hard-mouthed mule, frequently brought from the plough or the mill to receive the high demi-pique saddle; while the ploughman or the miller would take his staff, and, walking before, keep the mule in the long-bounding pace which carries those beasts on so rapidly, and with so much ease.

Had Vargas been preparing himself to be put upon the rack, he could not have gone through a better training for torture than he endured throughout this whole long journey; perpetually tormented with questions and

conversation, while a gnawing uneasiness preyed upon his mind; he at last succeeded in conquering the irritability which they excited, or at least in forbearing to express it, and he went patiently on, unmoved by narrative or interrogation, uninfluenced by jest or impertinence.

He rested as seldom as possible on the road, and frequently travelled all night. He took a few hours' sleep at a village as he approached the Guadiana, and set forth at day-break with fresh horses and a guide, who differed in nothing from the many he had already endured, but in his strong Andalucian lisp and louder tone of voice. His lisp and his loud voice were, however, set at defiance by Vargas's persevering silence; and, after a tedious six leagues, that took them over the Guadiana and some distance beyond

Medellin, they came to the venta where the relay was established.

"Here's an end of the longest course thou'st ever made over the same ground," said the postboy to his horse, as he turned his leg over the high crupper of his saddle.

"Call the master of the inn, and let horses be brought as soon as possible," said Vargas.

"What! your Excellency has got a tongue, ey? I wish you joy of having found the use of it just when you want it; for save and except by your own voice, you're not likely to have your ears kept in order by those you'll find here, seeing that there's nobody."

It was very true; the venta appeared to be deserted. One of its large barn-like doors was open, and admitted the postboy, who found not a living creature within its walls.

"How far is it to the next relay?" asked Vargas; "we must go on with these horses."

"As to the distance, Señor," replied the postboy, "it's seven of the best leagues in Estremadura; that is, best as to quantity; I can't say as much for the quality, as you may judge by the last league we came, which is like the high road to the devil* compared with it."

"I am sorry for it, friend; there is no resource—we must go on;" and Vargas was exciting his horse to do as he said, when the postboy interposed.

"Alto! my old boy—alto, Torero!" The obedient animal refused to proceed, and all the excitements which

* The Spaniards say that the road to heaven is rugged, up hill, and long; but that to hell is short, down hill, and well trodden.

Vargas could use only made him start, and caracole, and fly across the road.

Finding all he could do was to no purpose, he gave up his combat with the horse, and turned to remonstrate with its master.

During Vargas's endeavours to make the horse proceed, the man had quietly taken his seat at the door of the venta, occasionally giving his word of command of "Alto! acá!" and now that Vargas addressed him, he threw his cloak round him in the manner which Vargas had done during their ride, and staring at him with a look which he intended to be an imitation of his, he closed his lips firmly, indicative of determined silence.

The humour of his caricature might have forced a laugh from any one whose mind was less oppressed, less

broken than Vargas's; it exasperated him beyond his power of control; and finding that to all he could say his impudent guide remained uniformly silent, and with the same arch expression upon his countenance; he drew his sword, determined to punish the fellow for his insolence with a few smart blows. The Andaluz instantly threw his cloak aside with his left hand, and with his right drew from its sheath, which lay in his thigh-pocket, a long two-edged knife, the weapon common at that time amongst the lower classes in Spain. He held his hand down with the instrument laid along the palm of it and his middle finger, in the attitude to impel this deadly weapon; but he showed, by the increasing archness of his look, and his unbroken silence, that he kept his temper, and was only on the defensive.

Vargas knew that these men were so expert in throwing these weapons, that many of them could fix their knives fast at a mark in the wall at twenty yards' distance. He sheathed his sword, and called for a parley in a conciliating tone, saying, that he was a Cavallero.

"Knight or no knight," replied the postboy, "an thou be'st too proud to speak to an honest peasant, thou be'st too proud to take a favour from him; I've brought thee here, and here I'll leave thee."

"My good lad, I'm not too proud to speak to you; I'll give you a ducat to come with me to the next relay."

"Keep thy ducat to buy scabbards; an thou drawest thy Toledo for such trifles, it will scarce provide thee with 'em for a twelvemonth—yonder's the beast that will take thee

on; Torero's too good for the like o' thee."

Then pointing to an overhanging rock under which the venta was built, he gave a loud shout, which was answered by a sturdy lad who was leading a laden mule down the mountain-path.

The lad was soon at the door of the venta, and the mule's load of chestnuts and billets was exchanged for a saddle, which, with its iron box-stirrups, and high cuiss-supporters, would perhaps have outweighed the burthen from which it had been relieved. As Vargas saw that the mule was a good one, and likely to carry him as well as the horse which had already come some distance, he said no more to his impudent jester, but paid him and pursued his journey, with his new guide walking beside him. This was

a lad more rustic than those he had generally met with; and as the pace which his mule made him keep drew largely upon his lungs, he had little breath to spare for talking: after a few words in praise of his mule, he left the traveller to his own thoughts, and trudged along in silence.

In the present state of Vargas's mind, neither the sublimity, nor the wildness, nor the beauty or bounty of nature had power to draw his attention from the object of his journey. He had passed over magnificent sierras, and through rich corn fields, and vineyards interminable to the eye, and had hardly been aware of the transition. His attention was, however, arrested for a moment by the scene which lay before him upon arriving at an elevated point whence the road began to descend. The un-

even masses of mountain which formed large promontories jutting into deep valleys, had for some distance constituted the inconvenient and unvarying character of the road; but these all sunk into insignificance, and almost seemed a level surface for the foundation of an immense commanding rock of an extraordinary shape. On one side it rose perpendicularly to an enormous height, and stretched onward to a considerable distance, presenting to the eye a broad flat wall, in which the strata of different kinds of earth or stone traced long lines of varied colours, while here and there a tuft of hardy thorn seemed to lodge upon a small crevice, or a chance oak, with half its roots exposed, with difficulty reared its branches towards the source of light. It was hardly possible to conceive

that this majestic cliff was not a bulwark from an invading ocean; and after examining its utmost height, the eye involuntarily sought at its base the mass of waters by whose primeval convulsions it appeared to have been severed from a receding continent: but it arose out of a low narrow valley, the opposite declivity of which was formed by oak-covered headlands of the nature of those above mentioned, and which dwindled into hillocks by antagony with their giant opponent. A little further on, these shelved down, or broke abruptly off to form the banks of the river Matachel, which, as it approached its confluence with the Guadiana, was now a considerable stream. From the very summit of this high and even wall commenced the descent on the other side by a steep declivity, co-

vered at the highest part with large clumps of trees gradually intermingled with the verdure that overspread the lower region of this enormous wedge, which, standing alone on an extensive plain that commenced from its shelving side, suggested the idea of the advanced breastwork of some giant's fortress. At that end of the wedge which presented itself to Vargas's sight, the summit considerably overhung the base, which seemed to have been worn away by the eternal rippling of a small streamlet, rising from a height a few leagues distant, and forcing its progress to the Matachel, into whose current it fell just in time to increase its tribute to the Guadiana. The further end of the rocky wedge formed a declivity towards the plain, but was so steep as to render its ascent impossible.

At the northern extremity of this

singular and solitary mountain, just on the spot where it overhung the little river Palomas, stood an ancient Moorish castle, black with age and frowning in situation, upon a prominent scite which raised it above the trees that surrounded its foundation rock. Amidst these trees, and connected with the old fortification, the roof of a more modern building was discerned; and at a break in the foliage, the front of this could be seen, built of white stone, which seemed not long to have been hewn from a quarry about mid-way down the mountain. The Moorish style was preserved in the modern addition, in conformity to the ancient fortress; but embrasures for cannon were superadded upon a terrace which projected from the Castle along the summit of the mountain.

It was impossible not to be struck

with the picturesque situation of this Castle; and in viewing it, Vargas, for a moment, lost the sense of his miseries: his naturally vivid and romantic imagination arose with a sudden bound as it was relieved from the weight which had dragged it down, and in its rapid, but momentary flight, skimmed over an extensive range of thought; like the Sultan in the Turkish Tales, who, having put his head into a tub of water, passes in imagination through the detail of several years of his life before he withdraws his head from the dip.

"What is the name of that castle?" asked Vargas of his guide.

The lad was struck with surprise at this sudden termination of his long silence, and having totally relaxed from the labour of thought, it was some moments before he could renew

it: he filled up the space with an instinctive ejaculation of "Señor!"

Upon a repetition of the question Vargas obtained an answer, and then the machinery of the Estremeñan's mind having worked itself into action, it went on upon the impetus it had acquired, unassisted by the excitement of any new question.

"That castle, Señor, is the Castle of Alanje, and the whole of that great rock that it stands on is called the Peña de Alanje; and this great plain that we're coming upon is the Campo de Alanje; and it's all from one and the same thing, the town of Alanje, about a short league off—there—on the right—t'other side of the river—behind that hill—yonder's the steeple—just over that white piece of rock. A fine place the Castle is, Señor—and a heap of stories they tell about it,

when the Moors governed these parts —curses on 'em, say I, if all they tell be true. Many a good Spaniard has been tumbled off that north tower there into the river Palomas below—a fearful height, by the life o' St. Jerome. Many a year passed, and not a soul bowed to the cross at the gate, unless, may be, Father Lawrence, that lives at the Hermitage at t'other end of the rock. But the old Count came to live here up at the Castle about ten years ago, and built all that white castle that the people o' the plain call the White Moor."

"Does the Conde de Alange reside there now?" said Vargas.

"Yes, Señor—the good old Conde —I saw him myself last Easter—and that was much to see, for his Excellency never leaves the White Moor but upon very great occasions."

The name of the Conde de Alange acted upon the memory of Vargas, by some slight and untraceable concatenation, to recal the full weight of his woes; the truant flight of his imagination was instantly restrained, and he became again entirely absorbed in the contemplation of his present situation. In other days he had heard the name of the Conde de Alange, and the bare idea of those other days recalled a train of the most painful reflections. His companion went on, but he ceased to feel any interest, or even to hear what he said.

They reached the Peña de Alange, and began skirting its shelving descent by a road which led them on the plain. At a little distance from the road, higher up the Peña, stood a group of houses of rather better appearance than those which were gene-

rally seen in Estremadura. The most considerable of these was a large venta, which was placed at the extremity of the wood that reached from thence up to the castle, and through which the road to it lay. A traveller of a superior appearance was in the act of mounting a fine mule, the stirrup of which was held by the landlord of the venta, as Vargas came to the spot where the road from the castle joined that on which he was journeying. The traveller pushed forward his mule, and very soon overtook Vargas.

He accosted him with the freedom of good breeding, and said, that if they were going on the same road, it might not be disagreeable for them to join company. Vargas coldly replied, that he feared the speed with which he travelled would ill suit the conve-

lience of any one not equally impatient of delay.

The traveller imagining that the reserve of his companion might proceed from distrust, at once announced himself as Don Diego Meneses, a gentleman of Valencia, but then on his road to Seville.

Vargas bowed.

" Are you for Seville too, Señor ?"

" I am," returned his laconic companion.

" Then, Sir, since my company may, perhaps, be irksome," said Don Diego, " and you purpose to take the start of me, permit me to beg a favour of you. You are a gentleman, I am sure, and will not refuse to oblige another, who consents to be under an obligation to you."

In any country such a request could hardly be refused ; but in the country

of chivalry to have refused it, would have stained the reputation and honour of a knight. Vargas begged to know how he could serve him.

"I left Seville," Don Diego resumed, "upon the duty of a knight errant, in search of an injured young lady, and in mortal defiance of her base ravisher. Circumstances induced me to believe that I might possibly find both the objects of my search in the Castle of Alange. I have, however, been deceived in my expectations, and must return to Seville disappointed. The father of the young lady is enduring all the agonies of uncertainty, and if you arrive at Seville before me, you may spare him the pain of some hours' suspense, by informing him how unsuccessful my journey has been. You will undertake this kind office?"

Vargas again signified that he would.

" You will have no difficulty in executing this commission, for the father is a nobleman of the first rank in Seville—the Marquis of Bohorquia."

At the mention of the name Vargas suddenly checked his mule, and gazed upon his companion with a fixed wild look, which was unintelligible and surprising to Meneses. He was about to speak, when Vargas first broke the silence in a stern and peremptory tone —" Of whom were you in search ?"

The Valentians are proverbial for their irritability, and their readiness to take offence. The blood now boiled in the veins of Don Diego, and pushing his mule up to Vargas's, he asked him who he was who dared to interrogate him in that tone.

" I am Don Bartolomé Vargas."

"Then you are a villain, and the basest of villains; praised be the saint that brought me across thy cursed path!"

Not a word more was said before their swords crossed; indeed, the rapidity with which they both leaped from their saddles afforded no time for a reply. Meneses fought with a flushed cheek, and in strong anger against his adversary; Vargas with a sudden irritation at the insulting words which he had received, but with an indifference to life, which he seemed to defend only instinctively. The longes of Meneses were deadly; the attacks of Vargas were made only to disarm his adversary: the duration of the contest increased the swelling anger of the one, while it gave the sudden excitation of the other time to subside. Meneses made a powerful

advance upon his adversary, but Vargas's rapid eye saw that in his very spring his foot had slipped, and he dropped his point. Meneses fell; but he fell with all the violence of the impulse he had given himself, and his well-directed sword entered the undefended side of his antagonist with full force. Vargas reeled, and fell upon his prostrate enemy.

Meneses rose, covered with the blood of the unfortunate Vargas, whom he endeavoured to raise also.

"Where is Doña Cornelia Bohorquia?" said he.

"Had you asked me that question before you defied me as a villain," said Vargas, "you might, perhaps, have spared yourself the regret of having taken the life of an innocent fellow creature, which is only valued by himself as it can be useful to her

whose cause you seek to defend. Of Doña Cornelia's absence from her father's house I was ignorant until accidentally informed of it a few days ago. Upon hearing it I have flown from the Pyrenees to the Sierra Morena to defend her reputation and my own—to save her, if possible, from the ministers of the demon upon earth.—She is in the Inquisition!"

Meneses was seized with horror and astonishment; he stood pale and stupified; bursting out at length into exclamations of "Great Heavens!—How can this be!—What have I done!"

He was roused into action by the blood which had completely forsaken the cheek of Vargas, and was flowing abundantly from the wound in his side. He had fainted, and Meneses eagerly looked around where he

could find some water and procure some assistance. The lad who had been guiding Vargas had, upon the commencement of the quarrel, run back to the venta on the Peña de Alange, and he was now returning accompanied by several peasants. By the assistance of these, Vargas was conveyed to the venta, where he was restored to himself, and his wound bound up. In the mean time Meneses hastened to claim the hospitality of the Conde de Alange for the wounded man, and he returned with a litter, and the cordial invitation of the old Count to his castle.

The Conde de Alange——but to introduce the worthy Count to the reader at the end of a chapter, would be derogatory to his rank and character. In truth, the Conde de Alange, his family, and his castles, the Black

Moor and the White Moor, as they were familiarly designated by the inhabitants of the surrounding country, as far as the two moors could be seen —no trifling distance considering their prodigious elevation—deserve a whole chapter to themselves, and they shall have it.

CHAPTER VI.

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE Count of Alange was a noble veteran, who, after having run a career of glory under Charles the Fifth, brought it to a termination under his son, by retiring at once from war and the world. A younger son of the Marquis de Velada, with several brothers, intercepting his prospect of either title or wealth, at the age of fifteen he commenced a search after both, by joining the Emperor's disasterous expedition against Algiers, as a volunteer. He was fortunate enough to survive the hardships which accom-

panied that dreadful service, and by his courage in supporting them recommended himself to the notice of Charles. He afterwards engaged actively in almost all the subsequent enterprizes of his great master, always displaying valour, and sometimes procuring distinction.

In one of the short intervals of tranquillity which that ambitious Monarch's reign afforded, Don Felipe Davila (for his father, the Marquis, with profound reverence for royalty, had honoured his son with the name of the heir apparent to the throne) found time to go through his novitiate of the ancient and honourable order of Santiago de Compostella, and having served on board the gallies for six months, and submitted to the rules and discipline of a convent for one more, he became a Knight of Saint

James of the Sword, as the order was popularly called. The interest of his kinsman, Luis Davila, one of Charles's favourite generals, joined to his own courage and good conduct, procured him the commandery of Alange, an *encomienda* of the order, which, though not one of the richest of them, afforded him a very comfortable revenue; to which he added, shortly afterwards, the title of Alange, and the domains appertaining thereunto, by marrying the only surviving descendant of that ancient house, Doña Leonarda Pocatierra. This was the usual manner of giving new life to an expiring title. The re-establishment and preservation of such an one was probably the principal inducement to marry with Doña Leonarda, while with more certainty we may pronounce that the title was the only object which influenced Don

Felipe to espouse the Countess, for she was possessed of few personal charms, and she was of a certain age, a very certain age, not the least doubt existing of her having passed her fortieth year at the time of her marriage.

Although, however, the blood may have moved but slowly in the veins of the Countess of Alange, yet that which did circulate there was very *blue;* for the uncastilian reader must be informed, that according to a popular phrase in Spain, the lapse of years is supposed to give a cerulean hue to noble blood. Many ages must pass before the natural redness of the fluid begins to alter; but then every succeeding century gives a deeper tinge of blue, until at last the happy representative of an ancient family may boast that he is of *sangre azul.* The Countess of Alange was of blue blood;

but, with the exception of this advantage, and the title which she was allowed to transfer, there was nothing to render an alliance with her particularly desirable. She was fully sensible of the honour she conferred upon her husband, and, in fact, considered him only in the light of a necessary link to prolong the chain of her genealogy.

The domains attached to the earldom of Alange consisted of a barely inhabited tract of country, extending in a circle round the rock and castle, and on the borders of which stood the town, over which the Count possessed seignorial rights. In the town a large house, in a ruinous state, commonly called the palace, belonged to the family, and here the Countess of Alange had resided from the fourth year of their marriage, which, not having been

blessed with any offspring, had failed in the principal object for which she had contracted it. Her disappointment was manifest; her temper became sour, and her haughtiness considerably increased. This would have been a dreadful state of things for the unfortunate Count, had not her devotion heightened in exact proportion with the increase of her other qualifications; and, judging it criminal to live any longer in the dissipation of a court, she expressed her intention of retiring to the palace of Alange with her confessor. To this her husband made not the slightest objection, and they consequently had lived separate for a considerable number of years.

When the Count became an elderly man, and recollected that his wife was a more elderly woman, he anticipated no ill results from joining her retire-

ment. Time had worn out the poignancy of the remembrance of her former character, and he good-naturedly imagined that few dissensions could occur to interrupt the peaceful tenor of their declining days. A very short probation convinced him of the fallacy of this hope. He found her in a state which promised any thing but quiet to his future years. Indulged ill-temper had grown to ungovernable anger; and blind bigotry had magnified her devotion into insane transports; her life was passed in an unbending haughtiness, frequently varied by bursts of passion; passing, for the most part, from paroxysms of rage to paroxysms of religion, and falling from the excitation of both into the sullenness of pride.

Infirm of mind enough to be priest-ridden, she was unfortunately not suf-

ficiently infirm of body to be bed-ridden, or else the Count might have managed to enjoy as much quiet while his Countess inhabited the family state bed, as if she had already transferred her residence to the family vault. But while she continued to perambulate the palace from the alcova to the oratory, from the oratory to the corridor, from the corridor to the sala, and from the sala to the alcova, there was no time or place that he could fancy himself secure from the presence of his genius of discord. In looking around for the most eligible mode of retreat, the Castle of Alange occurred to his mind as a residence which held out such inducements as decided his plan. It was an ancient fortress abounding in military remembrances—his most productive source of happiness; it would be necessary for him to build

a residence for himself, the planning of which he anticipated with the greatest pleasure; and, as the rock itself supplied the material, the work came within the limits of his fortune; these were positive advantages superadded to the negative satisfaction of being absent from his wife.

In executing his plan, the Count, though literally, was not metaphorically, building a chateau en Espagne; the happiness that he had anticipated proved to be the result of his scheme. His spirits rose with his walls, and he directed the operations by which his new edifice was constructed with as much exhilaration as he had formerly conducted those by which other buildings were to be destroyed. At length the fortress of Alange, as the Count called it, to distinguish it from the ancient castle, to

which it was an appendage, was declared to be in a state fit to receive its noble owner, although this decision may possibly be considered to have been rather premature, since Don Felipe did not account it to be in a complete state for four years afterwards, during which period a number of workmen were constantly employed upon it; but Doña Leonarda is said to have discharged a massive missal, with large brass-clasped binding, at the person of her husband, the night before the work was discovered to be so far advanced, which, if it be true, may render the removal of the Count, at so early a period, less to be wondered at.

Don Felipe Davila accordingly took possession of his fortress with a retinue sufficiently numerous for the dignity as well as the service of his house. This consisted of an alferez,

or standard-bearer, an escudero, or squire, acting as gentleman usher, chamberlain, and equerry, and a chaplain, whose dignity is certainly much lowered by being thus misplaced in the list. These were the superior class of the establishment. Upon a step below these were a herald and a cupbearer, who, with characteristic importance, strictly observed the narrow line of distinction which raised them above nearly thirty other persons, who, having been at some period, however small, personal domestics to one member of the family or another, were necessarily retained for the remainder of their lives in idleness, at the board of the head of the house.

In giving the reader some account of the more important of these personages, I will not again be guilty of so gross a want of respect to the cloth

and the character of father Cachafuto, as I have been unintentionally led into in the enumeration of their names. I had forgotten father Cachafuto, who certainly does not deserve this neglect, being the very life of the society at the Castle of Alange. He was a good-natured round little man, a good Catholic, a good priest, and a good fellow; for he believed every thing, he absolved every thing, and he eat and drank every thing. It may not be unnecessary to account to the reader for the cacophony of this reverend father's appellation. It is not every body that has studied the Romish calendar sufficiently to be aware that there is such a saint as Saint Cachafuto.* As, however, his name had a very direct influence upon the

* Hispanicè *Cacafuto;* but this is too cacophonic for English ears.

profession, and consequently the character of the Count of Alange's chaplain, it is worth while to know how he got it.

The custom of administering the sacrament of baptism to infants, principally at Whitsuntide, prevailed in Spain at the period of our history, as it had been originally established in the primitive churches. The consequence was, that the duty of the parochial pastors, at this season, was usually considerably increased; and it frequently happened that they were assisted upon these occasions by some of their reverend brethren. This was the case in a small town of Estremadura, on the Whitsuntide of the year on which the Count's chaplain had been born. Santa Maria de los Dolores was the patron saint of the town; and with an emulative zeal for the

honour of the protecting Virgin, the greater part of the inhabitants proposed to give her name to their children, male and female.

The first two or three babes who were brought to the font received the sacred name, and the priest warmly applauded the devotion of the parents who had made so excellent a choice; but when another, and another, and another claimed a similar distinction, the holy father, who, not being of the town, was not impressed in the same pre-eminent degree with the particular feeling towards this church of the Virgin, began to remonstrate, and to set forth the inconveniences that must arise from such an indiscriminate use of the same name in the same society. His remonstrances were of no avail, and he was obliged to send forth near

a score of young Marias, boys and girls, into the world.

His patience, however, at length became exhausted, and he held a loud argument with a stout dame, the wife of an innkeeper in the town, in the course of which such irreverent obstinacy was displayed by the mother as raised the choler of the christener, who having discovered the day on which the child had been born, determined to yield no more, but that he should bear the name of the saint whose festival the church celebrated on that day. On reference to the calendar, no less than three canonized inhabitants of Heaven claimed the day of the boy's birth: of these, the least in degree, and the latest in date, was San Cachafuto. It was certainly ill-natured in the priest to select this

saint, when the softer names of San Carpophoro and San Abundio, whose feasts were upon the same day, presented all their euphony to his choice; but he was out of humour, and thought that the stubborn dame deserved no pity, and therefore, totally disregarding her tears and remonstrances, he dipped the squalling urchin, and dubbing him Cachafuto, redelivered him to the enraged mother.*

A slight knowledge of the Spanish language will suggest to the reader the unpleasant and ridiculous varia-

* For the truth of this circumstance there can, of course, be no other authority than that of the contemporary chronicle of this reverend father, preserved in the archives of his native town; but its probability is fully established by the coincidence of an exactly similar event having taken place in the present century, and within the author's knowledge.

tions and diminutives of which this name is susceptible; and when the general malice of schoolboys, and the particular propensity of the Spaniards to attach characteristic agnomena, are considered, the mother's abhorrence of her son's name will appear satisfactorily explained. Indeed she could never be brought to mention it; and when in the infancy of the misnamed child, it was necessary to use any other designation for him than the tender epithets which generally serve the purposes of more formal names with babies, she would make a hesitating pause, and, after a sigh, would call him "the Saint," meaning he that bears the name of the unnamable saint—an extensive ellipsis to be sure, but it was very natural that she should get over the horrid idea in as few words as possible. This being re-

peated, was imitated by the father, and subsequently by their immediate acquaintance, until at last the prefacing pause was dropped, and the little fellow was familiarly addressed as *el Santo*.

The facility with which a nickname is established is proverbial in all countries; and although this appellation had not the share of ridicule or opprobrium which would constitute exactly a nickname, yet it partook of the nature of one in this particular. What had originally been his shame, very soon became his glory: the little Cachafuto was only known as *the Saint* throughout the district; and as the etymology of his title was gradually lost in the obscurity of time, he acquired a certain sanctity from the habitual adoption of the sacred epithet. Great characters have owed

their rise to accidental causes; and to the unseemliness of his name, so unwillingly acquired, the little Cachafuto was indebted for his future profession and prosperity. He would probably have been initiated in the cunning of his father's art, or rather his father's cunning arts, many and various being the arts of an apt innkeeper, but the constant repetition of "*the Saint*," as applied to her son, engendered in the mother's brain an ambition to have him really canonized. Not that she actually expressed the extent of her anticipations, but she declared that she felt an internal conviction, that he would in manhood merit the appellation which he had accidentally received as a boy. The clerical profession was accordingly chosen for him, to which an additional inducement was held out by the

parental affection of a certain father belonging to a neighbouring monastery, who, being the keeper of the dame's conscience, had become the instructer of her son. By calling this friar *a certain father*, the reader is not to understand any uncertainty of parentage on the part of the innkeeper; he, good man, had no doubts upon the subject; and although there were gossips in Estremadura in those days as well as in these, their report, on a point of this kind, could tend very little to exhibit the truth.

Young Cachafuto was transferred from his legal father to his spiritual one, and he received his education in the monastery, where preparation and noviciate being duly passed, he took upon himself the vow, the frock, and the cord. Amongst the merry society of which he now formed a part,

there was a standing joke attached to the young man, which, although it certainly grew out of his name, yet seemed to derive a mysterious pungency from some unexpressed concomitant, and which, while it only puzzled Cachafuto, grievously offended his patron. This offence being often maliciously repeated, the reverend father thought fit to remove its cause, and he recommended his protegée to get himself transferred to the order of Preachers, in which his duty would afford him more extensive opportunities of seeing the world. Cachafuto followed his recommendation, and, after some years, the varying turns of fortune made him domestic chaplain, confessor, and companion, to the Count of Alange.

His peculiar qualification in the latter character consisted in the liberal

manner in which he laid open the acta sanctorum, the whole of which he had stored in the magazines of his memory. Not a saint nor a martyr but possessed a niche in his mind; not a miracle, from the cure of a fever to the conversion of an empire, but he could detail every circumstance connected with it. That he should remember them all is wonderful enough, without adding that he believed them all; but father Cachafuto was a simple-minded man, and not only professed to believe, but placed implicit faith in every miracle he had ever heard of. The wonderful works of the saints which he frequently related, were sometimes of a nature to excite the mirth of the Count, and sometimes his doubts; but upon these occasions, the logical father had an unanswerable argument to fix his Lord's

wandering faith : for the Count, ever since he had become a knight of the most honourable order of Santiago de Compostella, had paid particular devotion to that saint : he had spelt over the chronicles of the order till he knew them by heart, and had even extended his researches to the legend of Saint James itself. Here his study of divinity ended ; but as far as it went, it had produced his firm conviction of the truth of what he did know. Whenever, therefore, the Count received the relation of a miracle from his zealous chaplain with a smile, or an exclamation of incredulity, Cachafuto would bring him to reason with — " And is not that a trifle, Sir, compared to the most wonderful voyage of the ever-to-be-venerated apostle, Saint James, over the vast seas, from Joppa to Oviedo, in a

little boat made of stone?" Such a speech as this effectually silenced the incredulous Count, or rather, to speak more correctly, it generally had the effect of directing the subject of discourse into his favourite channel, and by inducing him to dilate upon the fully acknowledged miracles of Saint James, drew off his attention from the less credible wonders, and afforded the friar an excuse for not requiring his assent to them.

At the time when the rencontre mentioned in the last chapter took place, there was an inmate of the castle to whom it will be necessary to introduce the reader. This was a nephew of the Count's, the heir apparent of the Marquis de Velada, a handsome young man, who rendered the person and manners of a high-born gentleman ridiculous, by the re-

finements of fashion, and the language of conceit. Don Felix Davila was an only and a spoiled child; but he had been blessed with a good disposition and some natural talent, which the early indulgence he met with was not sufficient to counteract. At the age of five-and-twenty he had gone through the regular gradations of coxcombry. He had originally been a lady's coxcomb, and a reader of romances of chivalry; he had been a military coxcomb, and served in the English Armada; from which, having returned safe and sound, he had become a dramatic and poetic coxcomb.

Having been educated at the university of Alcalá de Henares, he had formed an acquaintance with the celebrated Lope de Vega, who was a short time his senior there. This acquaintance had been renewed and ri-

pened into friendship in the disastrous expedition in which they served together; and to the example and sudden literary exaltation of his friend, may be attributed young Davila's existing variety of coxcombry. His conceit, though very great, was still that of a gentleman, and of a well-educated man, and therefore not intolerable; and as he was blessed with good temper and good spirits, his company was often entertaining, and seldom offensive.

The cause of his "exile from the only mundane mansion of the Muses," as he called his absence from Madrid, was the unfortunate result of an affair of honour which he had had with the Marquis of Tirapunto. Don Felix had written a sonnet in praise of the Marquis's sister, in which, amongst other beauties, he extolled the size and shape

of her foot. In those days, to boast of having seen a lady's foot amounted to an assumption of the greatest familiarity. Two centuries have made a vast alteration in Spanish notions upon this point; for now-a-days the light silk petticoat requires the assistance of leaden weights to keep it a decent depth below the knee of the Spanish lady, leaving, not only the foot, but the taper ancle, and even the graceful swell by which it is immediately surmounted, to court the admiring gaze of the world. Don Felix's praise inferred knowledge to the jealous feelings of the Marquis, and he construed the distich into a boast. The Marquis's family honour being attacked in so fundamental a point, he threw himself in the way of Don Felix, who being as gallant a Cavallero as he was a gallant poet, scorned to plead the

poetarum licencia in mitigation of his offence. Swords were drawn, and the votary of Apollo passed his rapier through the body of his adversary. The wound might or might not prove mortal, and subject Don Felix to uncomfortable consequences; he therefore judged it prudent to pay a visit to his uncle in Estremadura, to avoid the possible result of a representation to the monarch.

At the time that Meneses claimed the rights of hospitality for the unfortunate Vargas, these were the inhabitants of the fortress of Alange, a building so remarkable from its situation, and so well known throughout the whole province, that it would have been strange if it had not acquired a popular agnomen in a nation so fond of characterizing names in general, of using comprehensive epithets,

and of making proverbial distinctions. The old Moorish castle, said to have been one of the earliest built after the fatal battle of Xeres, had long been chosen by the framers of imaginary records as the scene of many legendary horrors. Its time-coloured turrets rose high above the thick-set trees that partially clothed the acclivity upon which they stood, and suggested a sombre idea in perfect keeping with the dark deeds that were said to have been perpetrated within them. It required a darker epithet to characterize this castle than the blackness conveyed in the word *Moor* alone, and such an one was energetically supplied by the word *black* itself. The ancient castle of Alange was known in all the country around by the name of *el Moro negro*, for which, however, the English word *blackamoor* is not a

translation, as it implies a jocularity totally inconsistent with the superstitious timidity with which the Estremeñeans regarded the Moorish castle. When the white face of the modern appendage peeped over the trees by which it was surrounded on the shelving side, it appeared doubly bright from the contrast with its prototype, and its novelty excited an idea of quaintness enough to justify the absurdity in the opposing epithet which was given to it: it soon became as familiarly designated *el Moro blanco,* the white Moor, as its Arabic ancestor was the black Moor.

This chapter of Dramatis Personæ would be very incomplete if it were to close without giving some account of a very important character who resided upon the Peña of Alange, though not within the castle.

The Peña, or rock of Alange, has already been described as an enormous wedge, the base of which was at right angles with one of its sides. The extreme end of the summit upon which the Moors, black and white, were situated, considerably overhung the base, where the little river Palomas flowed. From the opposite point of the summit, the descent to the plain, though sufficiently steep to prevent the possibility of a path, was yet not quite precipitous, and was covered with trees of the same nature and size as those which clothed the shelving surface of the Peña. At this southern end, about fifty yards below the highest ridge, there was a small platform, upon which, as was frequently the case in spots of difficult and dangerous access, an ermita, or little chapel, had been erected, dedi-

cated to Santiago (a most happy coincidence for the Count), with a cell behind it for the residence of the officiating priest. This cell had for many years been occupied by a friar, whose rigorous sanctity had filled the country around with his fame. Indeed, Father Lawrence was said to have performed many miraculous cures amongst the neighbouring peasants, who had resorted to him when afflicted with illness; and these, together with his frequent personal contests with the enemy of mankind, of which he made no secret, his constant flagellations, and austere mode of life, were considered to hold out a certain prospect of canonization upon his decease; and the happy inhabitants of Alange calculated thus upon possessing the advantages of his miraculous interposition both while on earth and when in heaven.

With the introduction of Father Lawrence to the reader, closes this chronicle of the Alange family, up to the period when poor Vargas, lying at the venta, exhausted by loss of blood, received the invitation of the old Count to proceed to his castle, and with it ends the chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

The beast was sturdy, large, and tall,
With mouth of meal, and eyes of wall;
I wou'd say eye, for h' had but one,
As most agree, though some say none.
He was well stay'd, and in his gait
Preserved a grave majestic state;
At spur or switch no more he skipt,
Or mended pace than Spaniard whipt;
And yet so fiery, he would bound
As if he griev'd to touch the ground;
That Cæsar's horse, who, as fame goes,
Had corns upon his feet and toes,
Was not by half so tender hoof't
Nor trod upon the ground so soft:
And as that beast would kneel and stoop
(Some write) to take his rider up,
So Hudibras his ('tis well known)
Would oft do so to set him down.

HUDIBRAS.

MINE host of the venta had indulged his imagination with an unrestrained flight into the purse of the wounded

cavalier, from which, in the wantonness of anticipated possession, he had fancied himself drawing the last ducat; and he was at odds with his conscience as to the exact proportion which he might, without endangering his own soul, withhold from procuring masses for the safety of the soul which he took it for granted was on the eve of requiring them. The decision of this ratio was, however, rendered unnecessary by the arrival of the litter from the castle, by which event mine host was made an example of the uncertainty of human calculations. With a calmness truly philosophic, he reconciled himself to his disappointment, and this the more easily, because, like an able general, the moment that he found one manœuvre frustrated, he immediately framed a more feasible

plan, to which he gave up his whole attention.

With the rapid glance, which is no less necessary to an able innkeeper than to an able general (to continue the same simile), mine host had marked even amidst the confusion of battle the able muscular limbs of the mule which had borne Vargas, and he had equally noted the unwonted tractableness which it evinced in obedience to the recall which had issued from his own lungs upon observing the flight of the animals belonging to the combatants. As an ill-married man is always sure to heighten his misfortune by comparing the happiness he sees abroad with the misery he meets at home, the ventero could not suppress a sigh when he remembered the unmanageable obstinacy and irritating stubbornness of a big brute of the

same species that was the tenant of his stable. What rendered the contrast of manners more striking, was a certain resemblance of make, which, though small, was still sufficient to connect the image of the two creatures in the mind of a muleteer.

With the innkeeper's sigh would have ended his infraction of the tenth commandment, but for a slight circumstance to which the ever busy tempter of mankind gave the colour of opportunity, knowing, perhaps, that the morality of mine host was not proof against that powerful bait. The simple lad who had the charge of this most desirable mule had run to the venta upon the very commencement of the fray, regardless of the animals, which, upon suddenly losing their riders, had set off in different directions. This amounted to nothing less

than considering the lives of others in preference to the care of his own property, which, in the ventero's opinion, was a strong proof of mental incapacity; and this proof was amply corroborated by the circumstance of the boy's having afterwards gone in full speed, not after his own mule, which, as has been already mentioned, was easily recovered by the innkeeper himself, but after that of Don Diego Meneses, which had no point of resemblance to his own.

Old Nick supplied a link of concatenation between the lad's dullness and the mule's distant resemblance to his own; and though his mind was occupied with his more important plan on the purse of Vargas, an instinctive impulse induced him to retain the mule's bridle until he had safely placed the

animal in a small shed behind the venta, which had a strong padlock as an appendage. Here it was secured, and regaled with a measure of fodder, which, being nearly double that which was generally apportioned to the animals of travellers, rather indicated a notion of property in the feeder, than of kindness for the silly lad who was scampering over the country in pursuit of another man's beast.

The ventero was not a man easily to give up a prospect of advantage which was open to him; indeed, the obstinate perseverance with which he followed an object of gain, and the obdurate nature which he evinced in levelling his exactions upon travellers, whether poor or rich, had operated considerably in establishing the appellation by which he was known. He would, in the common course of things,

have been called the ventero of the Peña de Alange. The Alange was dropped, because la Peña, or the Rock, was sufficient to designate that peculiar spot all over the province; but his facetious neighbours had also contrived to drop the definite article before the word that remained, and he was commonly called *el ventero de pena*, the innkeeper of rock, and more commonly still, *el maestre de pena*, which, by leaving out all notice of the inn of which he was master, fixed the stony quality more decidedly upon himself. Without regarding the etymology of his title, I shall designate him in future by a simple translation of his most common appellation, calling him *Master Rock*.

The litter which contained the wounded Vargas was slowly winding up the steep path which led to the

Castle, when three men arrived at the venta with Don Diego's mule, which, in the wildness of unaccustomed liberty, had led them a dance of several miles. The owner of Vargas's mule was one of these; he had set off alone to secure the animal, but had been joined very early in the pursuit by a couple of muleteers from the venta, and, by their united exertions, they had at length attained their object. They were occupied in audible parlance; the boy loudly vociferating his regrets at having followed the wrong mule, and his companions as loudly jeering his stupidity.

At the venta the lad demanded the restitution of his own beast, and the payment of the post. Before consenting to either, Master Rock advised him to refresh himself with a draught of wine or a cup of aguardiente. The

boy refused the brandy; but with a doubting and a wondering look, he signified his willingness to accept of the draught of wine, which, coming from Master Rock, was like water from a stone. The mystery was, however, soon cleared up; for, after some altercation about the money due, which was set at rest by Master Rock's declaring that the Cavallero had been taken up to the Castle, and had died on the road; the lad was desired to take his mule, which he was glad to get rid of for the trouble it had cost in catching.

In the stable, the only animal that presented itself was Master Rock's unmanageable beast, which, whatever resemblance it might have borne to the other in the opinion of the ventero, was shockingly dissimilar in the eye of the boy. The saddle and bridle, indeed,

were the same; there was no mistaking the treble incrustation of rust upon the immense iron box stirrups, nor the distinguishing tone of the jingling bells that decorated the throat-lash, and gave forth their music in unison with the pricking of the animal's ears. Loud exclamation and violent remonstrance from the boy produced corresponding vociferations from Master Rock and the muleteers, who, having the cue to make the poor fellow their butt, joined their landlord for their amusement.

"I tell thee, youngster," said the master, "this is the beast that we took upon the plain as thine, and a precious job by Santiago we had on't; thy chase is nothing to our battle; the wasting of thy breath an't to be compared to the works of our boldness; I'd sooner fight fifty Englishmen with

my single toledo against their half hundred points, than such a brute as thy mule with his two heels."

"Thou liest, Master Rock, an ever Spaniard lied; our Castañero never flung foot in his life; an yon brute kicked thee 'tis an unnatural brute to kick its kin, and I'll have none on't. They say that he that went gadding to Seville lost his saddle,* but by St. Michael I have lost my beast."

"What talkest thou of saddle?" retorted Master Rock; "thou ravest, young mule-catcher. If there be fault, 'tis thine own fault, to follow the tail of another man's beast, and let thine own have its head; rail at thyself, not at me, man—put the saddle on the right horse."†

* Quien fue à Sevilla perdió su silla. PROV.

† La silla al cavallo que le toca. PROV.

"Put the saddle on the right *mule*, you beast-stealing son of St. Satan," echoed his adversary—his habitual use of the word saint upon all energetic occasions having betrayed him into this irreverend anomaly. The literal application of Master Rock's own proverb had nearly excited a diversion in his favour, by directing, for a moment, the current of the muleteers' mirth against their leader; but Master Rock perceived the turn of the tide while it yet flowed; and, seeing the danger of any further parlance, he seized hold of the lad, and, in the twinkling of an eye, perched him upon the back of the enormous beast, which, during the dispute, had been taken out of the stable.

A word from Master Rock set the mule in motion at a pace which, though rapid, did not exceed a stately

powerful walk; while the enraged rider, throwing his body backwards with all his force, his legs being stretched proportionably forwards and set stiffly at right angles with each other, endeavoured, but in vain, to make some impression upon a mouth which was much harder than the iron which it contained. In this situation, when beheld from the rear by the shouting muleteers who followed, the poor, tall, thin, powerless fellow, clasping with his straight legs the vast round body under him, could only be compared to a pair of compasses stuck astride upon a telescope.

" A hundred thousand devils seize on the hell-born brute, he's walking away with me."

A shout of laughter from his pursuers was caused by this exclamation.

" May the devil walk away with

you all as strongly and a little quicker, when he once gets hold of you," roared out the unhappy lad, as he was carried away from them by this mammoth of a mule.

His ineffectual endeavours to guide and restrain the animal were still audible when he was beyond their sight; for the short twilight of a southern region had been unobserved, and night had crept in upon them unawares.

The muleteers, who had joined with Master Rock in his practical joke upon the poor boy, were venders of the common Catalan wine, which generally found a very ready sale in the southern provinces of Spain. The mode of conveying this commodity was, and still is, in pigs' skins, called Borrachas, which are very imperfectly prepared, and preserve the form of the

living animal, with the exception of the head, of which there remains nothing; and the legs, which, being cut off at the first joint present the stumps, properly sewed up, to afford additional corners for the reception of the liquid. Detestable, indeed, is the flavour which these animal casks impart to the sorry libation of which they are the repository. To an unaccustomed palate, it has that peculiarly offensive property of making itself felt at the roof of the mouth like woolly mutton, which possesses the additional recommendation of being mawkishly cold. Such as it is, however, it is very well relished by the lower classes in Estremadura, Murcia, &c. and satisfactorily relieves the thirst of the labourer, or moistens the large onion which, with a crust and a bunch of grapes, constitutes his principal repast.

The two muleteers in question were part of a company who had been impeded in their mercantile journey, by misfortunes incident to the road. The lameness of one of their animals, and the bare feet of two others, had obliged them to deposit the burdens which they had borne at the venta de Alange; and two of the band were left in charge of the merchandize, whilst the others proceeded to the neighbouring town to remedy the evils. The itinerant wine-merchants had in vain endeavoured to strike a bargain with Master Rock; but the hardness of his terms, and the impenetrability of his determination, had hitherto prevented all hopes of arrangement. The success of his scheme upon the mule, and the advantage he expected to derive from it, had, however, the effect of opening his heart in an unusual degree. The

muleteers had also laughed themselves into peculiarly good-humour, such as afforded a reasonable hope of any possible concession on their parts. With this mutually favourable disposition, upon their return to the venta, the opposite parties to the proposed contract proceeded to a small loft where the borrachas had been placed for security, there to discuss by the light of a twist of cotton, floating in a little pan of oil, the important point of who should concede the single quarto which divided the price asked, from that offered.

While this consultation was going forward, or, in their own phrase, while they were plucking the turkey,* the lad who had made so unwilling an exchange, was setting his wits to work

* Pelando la pava. Proverbial expression.

for the recovery of his own mule. His wits were not of that incapable kind which Master Rock had calculated upon, as that able politician might have discovered sooner but for the interference of his two guests, who, by joining in the pursuit of the runaway animals, completely frustrated the well-arranged scheme which had influenced the boy in the choice of his object in the chase. If the mule which Vargas had rode was more valuable than Master Rock's iron beast, that which belonged to Meneses was worth both put together. A short survey had sufficed fully to establish the relative value of the two animals in the mind of the boy; and when he observed the beautiful managed riding mule of the Valencian gentleman, galloping off in the direction of his own

woods, he unhesitatingly followed this beast, leaving his own to its fate. Whether he sincerely endeavoured to catch it or not, it would be difficult to say; but his stupidity was established in the opinion of the muleteers, by divers and sundry escapes which the animal made from his very grasp; and, it is highly probable, if his companions had given over the pursuit, that neither mule nor boy would have been heard of at Alange again.

The boy's disappointment, therefore, increased his anger, and sharpened his wits. After the impotent violence of his rage had worn itself out, he considered that cunning was better than strength;* and, having succeeded in inverting the direction of his mule's head, he allowed the animal to walk

* Mas vale maña que fuerza. Prov.

away with him back again, without exerting his unavailing force to attempt to restrain it. In a short time he found himself at the stable door of the venta de Alanje, where the brute sounded a demand for admittance to his accustomed habitation, by a full toned bray.

The sound was as well known to Master Rock as ever bugle call was to the experienced ear of a warder, and it happened to fall upon the innkeeper's auditory nerve at the moment that he was pouring a libation to the consummated contract, to complete which, he had been induced to give an ochavo above his original offer, the muleteers conceding a like sum in their demand. The oozing pigskin had just begun to give forth its ruby blood from an orifice in one of its projecting limbs, when the echoing yell

made him grasp the spout that he was in the act of gently milking.

"By the white horse of Santiago that's the voice of *Bruto!*"

"Thou should'st swear by the black horse of the Bishop of Jaen when the oath is in the service of Bruto, master," said one of his hearers.

Master Rock continued the nervous clench of his fist upon the spout of his pigskin, until a second intonation of the same kind called him into action. Tying up the pig's leg with great rapidity, which the careful vintner yet rendered quite consistent with security, he was about to descend immediately; but recollecting at the door the old proverb, that a tapped cask is soon empty, he bethought him that having made a hole in his borracha, he might, perhaps, not find it so full as he left it; he therefore returned, and,

placing his purchase upon his shoulder, he proceeded to the stable with what haste his burthen would let him.

In the mean time the boy had jumped from the mule, and entering the stable without ceremony, perceived by the light of the moon, which he admitted through the great gate as he unfolded it, not his own animal, but what gave him infinitely greater satisfaction, the beast which he had followed so far and so fruitlessly. To have altered the saddle and bridle, and led forth his new exchange could have been effected in a much shorter period than that in which it was actually performed, had not the respondent voice of Meneses' mule been loudly raised to greet the arriving animal; and the echoing sounds operated upon the nerves of the trembling boy like

the report of the cannon upon a young soldier who is employed to dig a trench between two opposing batteries. Fearing alike the heels and the conversation of the animals, the lad found more difficulty than usual in changing the bridle, which, however, he succeeded at length in doing, leaving Master Rock's brute at perfect liberty; and no sooner was the saddle removed from his back, than he testified his sense of freedom, by rolling luxuriously in the thick lair of rotten straw, more like a dunghill than a litter, which covered the bottom of the stable.

While he was in this act, and the boy was labouring under the heavy weight of the saddle which he was about to place upon the other mule's back, Master Rock made his appearance at the door, loaded also, for the

reiterated braying of the animals had so confused and agitated him, that he had found neither thought nor time to place his purchase in security. At the sound of his first oath, which, if it was not loud enough, was at least coarse enough to claim some analogy with the language which had brought him there, the lad flung the saddle before him as he advanced; and, so judiciously was it cast, that Master Rock measured his length over it, still clinging with most providential tenacity to his swelling pigskin; for his head happened to fall within a few inches of the heels of Bruto, who, having sufficiently regaled himself by rolling and stretching his terrific limbs, was just about to recover his natural quadrupedal attitude. The energetic plunges which he made for this purpose must inevitably have reached

the scull of Master Rock, which, hard as it was, could hardly have resisted such a thundering attack, but they were fortunately intercepted by the skin of the defunct pig, on which every plunge produced a dreadful wound, and an instantaneous hæmorrhage.

The miserable Master Rock would, I believe, have been contented that the flood with which he was deluged had been his own blood, to have saved the discharge from his pigskin. In deep affliction he in vain attempted to staunch the flowing wounds of the carcase that was fast shrinking, while with a rage that scarcely left him the power of utterance, he raved out curses upon the villainous thief, who, nevertheless, had made the most of the landlord's distress, by springing upon

his prize barebacked, and galloping off at the mule's full pace.

Master Rock was sensible of the necessity of choosing between the two evils which presented themselves to him, but he was at a loss to determine which ran away fastest, the mule or the wine; and before this essential point was settled in his mind, they had both run away together; the echos of the hoof were lost in the distance, and the wine was lost in the filth of the stable.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh! we have torn the veil asunder,
The veil our inward features wore;
We've learnt to know we love, and wonder
To think our souls so blind before.

FROM THE SPANISH.

WHILE I have been introducing Master Rock to my reader, poor Vargas has been kindly received at the White Moor, where, having been placed under the care of Father Cachafuto, that reverend friar had administered a certain unction, and, further, a certain potion, all which he declared merely to be forms of no value in themselves; for that, if the wounded man was to live, the cure would take place in consequence of the miraculous intervention of one or

more of certain saints whose names he set forth at full length, together with a particular account of some of the more important miracles for which they had obtained canonization.

In consequence of the potion, or the blessing, left by father Cachafuto, Vargas passed a tranquil night, and in the morning was free from fever; his wound, indeed, was very painful, but the state of his general health convinced him that there was no danger to apprehend; and, indeed, it was a wound which, in our days, would scarcely have received commiseration. At an early hour the medical chaplain was by his bed-side, and upon finding the state of his patient, he launched forth in enthusiastic veneration of the great Santiago, who, being no less a saint than an apostle, and having, moreover, conducted the Christian

armies of Spain to battle, had nevertheless condescended to become the particular medium of a blessing upon his poor endeavours to restore health to the fortunate being whom he had taken under his care.

Vargas could scarcely refrain from smiling as he asked what connexion his amended health could have with the miracles of Santiago.

"My son," said Cachafuto, "you are yet ignorant of the favour which you have received; but know that I, an unworthy brother of the order of Preachers, addressed most particular orisons to the blessed Santiago last night for your recovery. Having prayed to be directed in my choice of a mediating saint, the chronicle of the glorious Santiago fell (assuredly by peculiar direction) into my hands. I knew, my brother, that the lesser

power is included in the greater, and that the saint that could sail from Joppa to Oviedo in a stone barge could heal the wound of a suffering sinner. And that that most astounding miracle *was* performed by the said apostolical saint, is beyond all shadow of doubt, for it came to pass——"

"With the history of Santiago I am well acquainted, good father," said Vargas, interrupting him.

"So much the better, my son; then you will recollect that it came to pass, that, having arrived at Braga, the blessed son of Zebedee——"

"I should be much bounden to you, holy father," said Vargas, "if you would defer the information, or refreshing of my memory, as to the miracles of Santiago, until I had holden some conference with Don Diego Meneses, my adversary in the

rencontre of yesterday, if he be still in this castle, as I doubt not he is."

"Thy reading of the chronicle of Santiago, my son, if thou hast read it, has profited thee but little—sad depravity! to prefer the conversation of a bearer of points and ribands to the consolation of the frock and the cord—horrid perversion! to turn from the contemplation of the miraculous Santiago, who, having landed in Galicia, arrived at Braga, where——"

"Reverend father," said Vargas, emphatically, "my business with Don Diego Meneses is one on which depends life and death; so, I pray you, let the gentleman be called to me forthwith."

"The breath of Don Diego Meneses cannot remedy the evil that his blade has caused," resumed the friar, thinking that Vargas alluded to his

own life, which had run such a risk; "but the ever-to-be-venerated Santiago can, by his influence, remedy every evil which may befall a mortal. I perceive, my brother, that you have much need of holy counsel."

But I will not favour the reader with father Cachafuto's sermon, lest he should not be blessed with Vargas's patience. That valuable virtue had almost forsaken him, and the friar had nearly succeeded in producing, by his obstinate devotion, the fever which his potion had allayed, when the patient was relieved by the entrance of Meneses himself, who brought a summons to Cachafuto to attend the Count. The friar, therefore, reluctantly retired, leaving an admonitory promise of a future commentary upon the legend of Santiago.

When Vargas and Meneses were

left alone, a mutual explanation took place between them. Meneses had little more to say than what he had already told Vargas previous to the contest of the day before. He had arrived at the house of the Marquis de Bohorquia immediately after the disappearance of his daughter, Doña Cornelia, which had taken place at the same time with the departure of Vargas. This coincidence, together with several suspicious circumstances, which were discovered to have happened previously, seemed to render it quite certain that Vargas was the author and companion of Doña Cornelia's flight. Every means had been taken to trace them, but all were without success. Meneses had assisted very actively in the search, and had undertaken a journey to Alange in consequence of some slight proba-

bility which had been suggested, that the fugitives might have chosen this secluded spot as their hiding-place.

The information of Don Diego went not beyond this: that which Vargas possessed and afforded was of a more extensive and interesting nature. He felt that he could but assist Cornelia by openly communicating to Meneses the situation in which he stood, and he accordingly gave him a brief account of his whole life. That this may be done more satisfactorily to the reader, and more conveniently to myself, I shall use the privilege of transposing Vargas's narrative from the first person into the third, and take the detail of it into my own hands.

The Marquis of Bohorquia was a nobleman of considerable influence at Seville, where he had married, and

become the father of one child, a daughter, immediately after whose birth his wife expired. Some months after this event, the Marquis took under his protection a male child, about three years old, whom he admitted into his nursery upon the footing of an equal with the little Cornelia. The history which the Marquis gave of this child to those to whom he thought it necessary to account for his appearance, was simply that he was the offspring of noble parents whose nobility had outlived their wealth, and that having been rendered a complete orphan by the death of his father under the walls of Peñon de Velez, the conquest of which was the subject of conversation at the time, he had been induced, from old friendship, to take the desolate child, and to give it an

education more suitable to his birth than to his prospects.

The little stranger, whom the Marquis called Bartolomé Vargas, was soon domesticated in the family. He grew up to be the companion and playmate of Cornelia, and when they became old enough to ape the manners of maturer age, her friend and counsellor. No distinction whatever was made between them by the Marquis. If Cornelia was more fondled than young Vargas, the difference was not greater than that which her sex and her beauty might claim.

When Vargas was sufficiently advanced in years to make it necessary to direct his education into some particular channel, the church was chosen for him by the Marquis; and with that view he was admitted into the

college at Seville, where he was brought up to enter into holy orders. Here he developed an acute mind and a great thirst after knowledge, so much so that it was predicted by his reverend tutors that he would become a shining pillar in the church, and an honour to their institution. The information which he found such pleasure in acquiring he was equally delighted in imparting to his dear little Cornelia; so that, by his lessons, which were regularly transferred as they were received, Cornelia Bohorquia acquired a portion of learning not only infinitely greater than that possessed by her sex in general, but even far superior to that which was, at the time, attained by even the best educated members of society in Spain.

Although the knowledge thus ob-

tained was confined to the Latin language, and a smattering of the Greek, together with the study of theology according to the Romish church, yet the great advantage that Cornelia derived from it was the habit of reasoning which was established in her mind at a very early period of life, and which had considerable influence in the formation of her character. A natural consequence of the manner in which she acquired these attainments was, that Vargas insensibly obtained a powerful empire over her mind. She looked up to him as the source of all her information, and the deference which this produced towards him was very soon mingled with a conviction that she looked up to him as the source of all her happiness. The tender bosom of an Andalucian maid is not particularly strong in resisting the

insidious attacks of the soft passion, and the less susceptible hearts of the fair inhabitants of colder regions have not been found proof against the continued intercourse of affectionate attentions, when assisted by the constant arguments of gratitude within.

Time passed, and Vargas attained his twentieth year. Cornelia was in her seventeenth, and experienced the most lively affection for him. She loved, and like an Andalucian, loved ardently. She felt all the anxiety, all the nervous jealousy of an Andalucian passion; but the cultivation which her mind had received had purified the flame that it had kindled in her heart, while the strength of tone which her character had assumed, enabled her at once to rectify the irregularities of her affection, and to command her feelings.

Vargas, though perhaps as affectionately attached to Cornelia as she was to him, had not become awakened to a knowledge of his passion. When his mind had somewhat matured, and he began to investigate more closely the theological questions which were proposed in the schools for his information, he found nothing to satisfy the appetite for truth which he had acquired. The deeper he went the greater darkness environed him. Tome after tome did he displace from its shelf, and carefully did he wade through the appalling solidity of each. He left off, however, in greater confusion than he began, and at length got so completely entangled in the maze of traditionary tenets, and so disgusted with the inconsistencies of papal infallibility, that he lost the guiding star which had hitherto di-

rected him in his anxious search after truth, and, closing his eyes in impatience, he gave up at once his belief and his desire of believing.

The nature of this investigation had abstracted him too much to allow him to perceive the state of his own feelings with respect to Cornelia. He felt, indeed, that her conversation and attentions afforded him more satisfaction than any thing else in the world, except his studies, and his application to these prevented him from remarking the progress of any other feelings. Nothing whatever had occurred to call forth the dormant energies of his passion. The even tenor of his life was unvaried by any sudden burst of action, or any extraordinary occurrences. The Marquis had become a *beato*, or devotee, and passed the greater portion of his time in the company of his most intimate friend, the Archbishop of Seville, and

of some of the higher dignitaries of the cathedral church; for, as is frequently the case, his pride had increased with his devotion, and his aristocratic principles guided him even in his intercourse with divines. The influence of the Marquis's character upon the domestic arrangements of his family was such as to keep every member of it in a seclusion extremely favourable to the growth of his daughter's passion, and at the same time affording little opportunity of calling forth the feelings of Vargas.

It was only a short time before the period appointed for his taking orders that Vargas, in despair and infidelity, threw by his books and his breviary. His mind had, until then, been so fully occupied, so anxiously engaged, even from the earliest development of of his reason, that there had been no room for the admission of other spe-

culations ; there had been no vacancy for the reception of idle curiosity, no field for the flights of imagination, no time for the investigation of the heart. When he wildly and impatiently threw down the barrier of faith which had dammed up the current of his thoughts, the vacuum that took place in his mind was rapidly filled up by a heterogeneous mass of interesting ideas. The most lively of these suggested the question—Who am I? and excited his astonishment that it had not occurred frequently and importunately before. An indistinct connexion brought another question to his mind: Why must I become a churchman? Many new and strange suggestions followed, but these two questions so far exceeded in interest all the other matter of his thoughts, that they became the sole object of them.

Amidst the wreck of all just reasoning upon the subject of religion, there was a naturally good principle of morality in him, to which he instinctively adhered. In throwing off the bridle of religion he did not take upon himself the yoke of the spirit of evil, neither was he content to wear the cloak of hypocrisy, nor to become a teacher of those tenets which he himself rejected. He determined not to become a priest, and this determination, together with an anxious desire to know his origin, led him to the closet of the Marquis of Bohorquia.

Vargas began by requesting information concerning his parents, at which the Marquis first smiled, and afterwards reproved him for his restless curiosity. He pointed out to him that he had not raised hopes by his education which he had disappointed

in his manhood: that in becoming a minister of the Gospel he would be at once upon an equality with the noblest families, branches from which so constantly took upon themselves the frock and the cowl; and that through the friendship of his most illustrious and most reverend father the Archbishop of Seville, who had already shown much kindness towards him, he might look forward to enjoy even the highest dignities of the hierarchy.

This turn of the conversation immediately introduced the resolution which Vargas had formed of declining to enter into the clerical profession, which being delivered mildly, but firmly, by the undismayed young man, struck the Marquis dumb with astonishment. His astonishment was quickly succeeded by indignation and anger, which rose to such violence,

that Vargas, perceiving that his arguments could make no impression, and indeed could not be heard, remained silent under a storm of imprecations, denunciations, and upbraidings.

Such a conference was not likely to lead to any satisfactory arrangement, and Vargas left the Marquis, having borne, without murmuring, the whole weight of his displeasure. An interval of a few hours had apparently calmed his irritation, for when Vargas returned to his closet, in obedience to a summons which he had received, he found that the storm had subsided, and that the Marquis had recovered his serenity. Vargas attempted to enter into an explanation of the motives of his conduct, but he was stopped short by the Marquis.

" Hold, young man. I did not summon you to my presence to hear

you defend your folly, but that you should hear me pronounce your fate. I give you four-and-twenty hours to recover your senses—at this time to-morrow you must take a solemn oath forthwith to enter into holy orders, or I shall instantly deliver you over to the Inquisition, with an accusation of heresy. Leave me, without daring to reply."

Vargas was about to disobey the latter command by attempting to speak, but the Marquis clapped his hands, and desired the servants, who made their appearance in consequence, to conduct Don Bartolomé from the apartment.

With the deepest dejection Vargas retired to a grotto that stood at the end of the Marquis's garden, from which a communication had been made, by special favour, with the

beautiful gardens of the Alcazar, the Moorish palace at Seville. This convenience had been procured for the Marquis by his friend the Archbishop, both as it supplied a retired and delightful promenade to Cornelia, for the walks as well as the halls of the palace were deserted, except upon Sundays and festivals, when it was open to the public, and also as it afforded an easy communication to the archiepiscopal palace, which was contiguous to the gardens on one side, as the Marquis's house was on the other. The door which lead from the grotto was ingeniously hid in the recess of an artificial rock, from which issued one of the many fountains that conspire to cool the sultry air of Seville.

Vargas threw himself upon a stone seat which was placed at one end of this grotto, and gave himself up to the

comtemplation of the alternative which had been offered to him. While his thoughts were thus deeply engaged, the door leading to the Alcazar was opened, and Cornelia passed through it; but the moment she saw Vargas, she withheld her footstep, and remained fixed in the attitude of one not wishing to disturb the current of his thoughts.

I have already said that Cornelia was thoroughly sensible of the state of her affections. She felt that she loved Vargas most ardently, but she had always considered her passion as a hopeless one. The great barrier which unceasingly obtruded itself upon her mind was the profession which the man whom she loved was destined to embrace. This was the great, the impassable limit to all her hopes; and so complete was its sufficiency to de-

stroy them, that she had never imagined any auxiliary obstacles to her happiness. The unconquerable buoyancy of youthful spirits would often make her fancy overstep this separating wall, but then all beyond was one boundless prospect of uninterrupted happiness; then she wantoned in the sunshine of unrestrained joy, and conjured up no cloud to chill the short-lived illusion. Her mind had been so long accustomed to dwell upon this idea as the only, because incomparably the greatest, obstacle to an union with Vargas, that it was incapable of giving due weight to any other that could possibly be suggested.

Cornelia had been taking a walk in the gardens of the Alcazar, and at the same time had been indulging her imagination in a flight into the ro-

mantic regions of unattainable happiness, when she observed her father, in unusual agitation, crossing to the palace of the Archbishop. He bore so unaccustomed a brow that she was convinced that something important must have occurred to move him, and whilst waiting for his return, all the misfortunes that could affect him deeply passed in review before her mind. She waited with an impatience which, as it increased, was accompanied by a sickening anticipation of some yet unconjectured horror. He came at last, and to her anxious and affectionate inquiries only replied, "Trouble me not—I am only afflicted with the ingratitude of Bartolomé—he rebels from my commands—he refuses to become a priest."

"Refuses!" cried Cornelia, "positively refuses?"

"Madly refuses," returned the fa-

ther. "I have allowed him twenty-four hours for consideration. Interrupt me not—I am not in a mood for thee, Cornelia."

The torrent of ideas, the hopes of happiness which this short information admitted to the mind of Cornelia, was almost too agitating for her frame. The prison wall of her heart was thrown down. That prospect which she had so often contemplated as in a picture with rapture, was now laid open before her—real—possible—tangible. It bore the bright hue which her fancy had given to it; the unsullied bloom of innocence was upon it; the unclouded sky of prosperity hung over it. Oh that the early colouring which youth and love give to our pictures of futurity could be preserved from the destructive influence of time and experience!

Cornelia's ardent imagination glanced

rapidly over and over the happy anticipations that crowded upon her, without admitting one of an opposite complexion. Of the heart of Vargas she felt assured. She did not even wait that he should tell her that it was hers; and the great solitary impossibility had so long borne the brunt of her upbraidings, that when it was removed no other presented itself. She overstepped all intermediate difficulties and gradations, and, by the happy power of enthusiastic affection, acting upon an exuberant fancy, she constituted herself the wife of Vargas.

It was with these feelings that she entered the grotto where he lay, and, upon seeing him, her father's words recurred to her memory. "My father has given him a period for consideration," thought she; "he is then debating on my fate;"—and she

remained motionless, but gazing upon him with a look which unrestrainedly expressed the most tender anxiety.

Vargas at length perceived her. She roused him from the internal agitation of irritated passions and reckless despair; but there was a powerful charm in her manner and look which softened at once all the feelings of his heart, and suddenly drove them into a new current.

"My dear Cornelia," said he, "your father has turned me from his door."

"My father cannot turn you from his daughter's heart, Vargas," she replied; and the words fell from her lips with a lingering accent, and a tenderness of intonation, more explanatory than the most undisguised avowal—more convincing than the most powerful eloquence.

Her look — her tone — her words broke the spell of ignorance that had hitherto blinded Vargas to the nature of his own feelings, and at once awoke him to a sense of his passion, and gave him the certainty of its return. The ray of light that burst in upon him illuminated a visionary scene, beautiful as that which had so often occupied the dreams of Cornelia. In the short pause which followed, he glanced over the whole expanse of happiness before him with a rapidity impossible to a less intense feeling, and, then starting forward, he clasped Cornelia to his heart with the most energetic fondness.

A flood of tears relieved both their hearts. There never were two happier creatures in the world than they were at this instant; and yet both were in circumstances of the greatest

misery. Vargas was the first whose mind admitted this painful reflection. For many minutes he strove to refuse it entrance, and pressed the trembling Cornelia the closer to his breast, as if she could drive out the unwelcome conviction; but, with the importunity of truth, it made its way, and converted the balmy tears that had given relief to his swelling heart into bitter drops of sorrow.

"Great Heaven! whither are we rushing? upon what a precipice do we stand — wretched as my ingratitude has been to-day, I am rendering it a damning crime—" and then pausing he added, "if there be a hell hereafter."

It was long, very long, before Cornelia could comprehend the difficulties, the dangers, or the duties of their particular situations; and when

they were laid before her by Vargas, she considered them all as insignificant when placed in opposition to her affection. Vargas had abstained from representing to her the alternative which the Marquis had threatened if he continued in his resolution of refusing to take orders—an alternative so loaded with terror to a Spanish ear, that he felt the cruelty of using it unnecessarily—but the strength of his arguments was falling fast before the strength of his affection. Evening had overtaken them, and the tone of the conversation had gradually become more tender. He felt the imminent danger of prolonging it, and, making a violent effort to command himself, he attempted to leave her.

"Cornelia, it is hard, very hard, but now, even now, when our hearts have first met, at that moment we must

part. We have exhausted in this meeting all the happiness that was destined to sweeten our lives. Nothing but misery is before us. To-morrow, if I am in Seville, I must choose between the dungeons of the Inquisition or the cloister of the cathedral. Either divides us for ever. To be near you, but separated by an impassable gulf, is less endurable than to be far removed, but with the small light of possibility for hope to live by."

He did not dare to trust himself with even a glance at the agony of Cornelia, but he darted away, and had reached the house before her piercing cry to him to return could be repeated. He passed through the patio, and into the street, where he continued his speed as if he had been escaping from some close pursuit.

At the banks of the Guadalquivir his impulse was still the same, and he had scarcely slackened his pace when he was stopped on the narrow bridge of Triana by a young cavallero, with whom he was acquainted.

" Whither are you going, Don Bartolomé?" said he. " Is it an enemy you fly from? my sword is at your service."

The moment Vargas stopped he felt himself so exhausted as to be unable to proceed. To a repetition of the question, " What do you fly from?" he answered incoherently " From myself—from the Inquisition."

" Hush, for Heaven's sake," said the young man, looking cautiously round; " there is no safety from the Inquisition on the soil of Spain; let us try her waters; come to this boat with me."

Vargas suffered himself to be led, and he entered a boat which had apparently been waiting, and which put off the moment they were on board, rowing rapidly down the river.

The unhappy Vargas had fallen in with young Don Juan Mendoza at the very instant that he was about to embark on a secret commission for England. Seville was at that time the port through which all the riches of the new-found world were poured into Spain. Some miles down the river numberless ships crowded its broad expanse. One of these received Mendoza and Vargas, and immediately got under weigh. Vargas gave himself up unresistingly to the current of his destiny, and occupied himself wholly with the contemplation of his misery. He remembered that a faithful servant of the Marquis

de Bohorquia, Perico, with whom we have already made the reader acquainted at Zaragoza, had been sent to Rota, the town at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, upon some errand. In passing by the place, he had no difficulty in finding him out, and he intrusted him with the following letter for Cornelia.

"Cornelia, I am embarked for England. The waves of the great ocean that will bear me thither are less tumultuous than the agitated feelings of my heart. Love, strong love, shall steer my mind safe through these, as the little bark preserves my body from those. The bark will guide me to a far distant land, but the pilot of my mind will direct its course ever, ever to thee, Cornelia."

CHAPTER IX.

Hail sacred Truth, that plays around the mind,
And Heaven-directed ingress learns to find;
One ray admitted tells the open way,
And the dark soul redeems from night to day.

FROM THE SPANISH.

DON JUAN MENDOZA, with whom Vargas embarked so precipitately, was a high-spirited young man of good birth, who had indulged in that kind of reading, which at the end of the sixteenth century became so general in Spain, as to excite the keen satire of Cervantes. Though the chivalrous romances which he had stored in his memory had not infected him with a mania equal to that of the knight of La Mancha, it had induced him to seize with avidity the first rational op-

portunity of engaging in a chivalrous enterprise. Such a one presented itself in the interesting situation of the young Queen of Scots, whose imprisonment was the theme which at this moment occupied the conversation of the higher class of society in every part of Europe. Don Bernardo Mendoza, Don Juan's uncle, was the Ambassador from the Court of Madrid to that of London. That nobleman had joined in Throgmorton's plot for the relief of Mary, and for the re-establishment of the Catholic religion in England. At the commencement of this impotent conspiracy, the Ambassador had written to his nephew, making him privy to it, and giving him a commission to assist the cause, by bringing to England as much treasure as he could procure for the purpose of distribution amongst Elizabeth's Catholic subjects.

The young man entered with ardour upon the undertaking; and, having raised a considerable sum among the merchants, who were amassing wealth rapidly from the new source which the discovery of America had opened to them, he was now conveying the supply to its destination, with the fullest idea of its importance to a great cause, and the highest hopes of ultimate success.

Young Mendoza arrived in England just in time to witness the execution of Throgmorton; and though he would have evinced the most heroic firmness and the most chivalrous exultation if he had been exposed to the consequences of his connexion with the conspiracy, yet he could not help considering himself as a very fortunate fellow to be able safely to return to Spain with his uncle, whose life was

secured by his Ambassadorial character, but who was desired to quit the realm.

Vargas had neither spirits nor inclination to connect himself with the enterprise. The state of affairs upon his arrival precluded the necessity of his declaring his disapprobation of the religion which it was their object to establish. He refused to return to Spain; and Don Juan parted from him, therefore, in London, having provided for his immediate necessities, by generously leaving him a few ducats. Vargas found himself alone and friendless in a foreign, and, he might now add, an enemy's country. The absolute necessity for exertion had the effect of preventing his mind from falling into that dreadful state of discontent and despair, which is generally produced by misfortune and a

feeling of desolation, when unopposed by a religious principle. Fortunately a means of employment presented itself, which accorded, in some degree, with his habits of study.

At that time the Spanish language was cultivated by every one who sought the fame of an accomplished gentleman. The power of the Spanish sceptre had been extended by Charles V. over a vast portion of Europe, and the fame of the Spanish arms had alike increased by his contests and his conquests; throughout Italy, Germany, and Flanders, the language was spread by intercourse; in France and England it was rendered necessary by the frequent discussion of the affairs and the policy of the Court of Madrid, which took place in those countries. Spain, too, had lately displayed a new world to the admiration and attention

of the old; and what, perhaps, tended more than all to the cultivation of the Spanish language beyond its natural limits, was, that it supplied a large portion of the courtly reading of the time; the pastorals and chivalrous romances of Spain combining with the French novels to form the library of the ladies and lady-loving gallants of the day.

Vargas found no difficulty in obtaining employment as a teacher of the Spanish language, by which, for a considerable time, he procured a sum sufficient for the supply of his circumscribed wants. By degrees he became familiar with the English language; and, being forced to mix in some degree with the people amongst whom he lived, he began to recover from his dejection. He had hitherto carefully abstained from allowing his

mind to return to the contemplation of those subjects on which he had wasted so much time, and in the labyrinth of which he had lost himself.

Living entirely without religion, he had never even entered a Protestant church, much less had attended any celebration of the Catholic mass, until the persecution, to which those who professed the Romish creed were at this time exposed, rendered it a measure of precaution to take every step to prevent a suspicion of Catholicism being excited against him. With this view, only, Vargas at length attended the public service of the Church of England. Upon first entering the edifice, he was forcibly struck by its simplicity, so strongly contrasted with the pompous decorations, and what he now looked upon as ridiculous emblems, which crowded the chapels of

the cathedral at Seville, and to which he had been so long accustomed and enslaved. This feeling only gave place to one of admiration at the consistent simplicity of the liturgy, which was rehearsed by the clergyman in an intelligible language, and a clear and devotional tone. He felt irresistibly impelled to join in the sincere but temperate effusion of praise and thanksgiving; and he found all the arguments which had thrown him from the bosom of the Catholic church, and which his mind rapidly recapitulated, totally insufficient to prevent the awful conviction of the presence of an All-powerful Deity, to whom the united voices around him were addressed.

This was a frame of mind peculiarly adapted for the reception of a powerful impression. It is when this effect

has been produced upon the feelings, that thousands of creatures have been confirmed in faith, and directed in a thoroughly different course of thought and action, by circumstances comparatively trifling, and by connexions of ideas apparently indistinct, but to which Providence has been pleased to attach in the mind of the individual an importance and distinctness sufficient to produce the merciful end in view. Such was the case with Vargas. At the moment that he was thus solemnly affected,—while his feelings were yet fresh, and before there had been time for them to subside, the priest began in an impressive tone to read the Jubilate. This psalm he had heard recited a thousand times at Seville; but then it had been in the cold dead style of a formal repetition, or in the unaccentuated chaunt and bawl-

ing response. Although Vargas was well versed in Latin, yet it requires not merely to understand, but to be in the habit of thinking in a language, to be able at once to feel the force of the ideas conveyed through it to the mind. He might have allowed the sounds, *Jubilate Deo omnis terra, psalmum dicite Deo* to have fallen on his ear without even reaching his understanding; but to the English language he was now thoroughly accustomed, and his heart felt every word as the priest read aloud "O be joyful in God, all ye lands; sing praises unto the honour of his name; make his praise to be glorious. Say unto God, O how wonderful are thy works, through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies be confounded—Oh, that all the world would worship

Thee, sing of Thee, and praise thy name." *

In consequence of his feelings upon this occasion, Vargas became a constant attendant upon divine service. He provided himself with the English translation of the Bible then in use, and studied it with great attention. To complete the establishment of his unsteady opinions, there was yet wanting the judicious direction of some sensible divine, and this he soon found. In his occasional intercourse with some of the families in which he taught, he had become acquainted with a moderate, amiable, and intelligent clergyman, and he had the good sense to feel the difficulties under which he laboured, and to apply with

* This is according to Coverdale's translation, which was then used.

perfect candour to this person for assistance and direction. He was not disappointed—an open confession on his part produced a commiserating and affectionate interest on the part of his spiritual adviser, and he became in a short time a sincere and earnest Protestant upon the conviction of his reason.

One of the first effects of his conversion was the anxious desire which he felt to impart the benefits and blessings of his belief to the object of all his earthly solicitude. In proportion as this desire increased, he felt himself strong in the faith which he so ardently embraced, and imagined that the purity of his intentions would be a powerful shield against the temptations to which he should be exposed in her society. He argued himself into a belief of the propriety of this

so strongly, that at last he began to look upon it as a paramount duty to enlighten the spiritual darkness in which he now conceived Cornelia to be involved, and the principal occupation of his thoughts was to discover a feasible plan by which he should be enabled to perform this sacred duty.

He had come to no satisfactory decision on this point, when a means unexpectedly presented itself in what appeared to him to be a mysterious and a providential manner. The dreadful persecutions to which the Catholics had been exposed since the primacy of Whitgift, and the appointment of the court of ecclesiastical commission, had very much reduced that body; but the remnant of them, though hiding their persons and concealing their tenets, still anxiously expected the triumph of their cause,

and looked towards Spain as the probable instrument by which, under Providence, it would be obtained. The vast preparations which were at this time making at Lisbon for the invincible Armada, which was destined for the conquest of England, not only raised their hopes to the highest pitch, but excited their activity to render every possible assistance to the attempt, by fomenting every internal dissension, and encouraging the disheartened Romanists to co-operate in the cause. Many Spanish spies secretly found their way to London, and one of these had charged himself with a letter from the Marquis de Bohorquia to Vargas. London was not at that time what it is now, and foreigners were easily traced, however retired they might live. The Spaniard, therefore, had little difficulty in discovering

Vargas; and having well assured himself of his identity, he placed the letter in his hands and left him. The tenor of the epistle was as follows.

"Don Bernardo Bohorquia, Marquis de Bohorquia, Conde de Villanada, Lord of the towns of Peña-negra, Montellano, and Puentearco, &c. &c. &c., to the Cavallero calling himself Don Bartolomé Vargas, health.

"Ingratitude, as it was the first, so it is the basest, of the many sins that deform the human heart. Forgiveness is like the full ear of corn that speaketh good things of the soil in which it grows; neither is it right to cherish anger even for a just offence. My heart taketh pity upon thee, Vargas; the desolation which is preparing for the predestined possessors of eternal fire amongst whom it has been thy punishment to dwell since thy evil

spirit led thee forth, must render thy abode as dangerous to thy body as it has ever been to thy soul. Return with all speed to Seville—fear not my anger: it has passed, and has left in its place much desire for thy temporal and eternal welfare."

Vargas did not endeavour to discover the causes of this relenting spirit in the Marquis, nor the manner in which he had become acquainted with its result, but looking upon it as a providential approval of his design, he forthwith made arrangements to obey the injunction contained in the letter he had received. This he found no easy matter in the existing state of affairs, but he succeeded at last. By what means he accomplished this object I have not been able to discover, and as the interest of his story depends rather upon his arrival at Se-

ville, than upon the manner of his getting there, I have been contented with ascertaining beyond a doubt that he did get there just about the time that the Duke of Medina Sidonia's invincible armada was taking its departure from the mouth of the Tagus.

At Seville he soon found an explanation of the Marquis's conduct. The influence of a long-standing affection in his heart, aided by the continued solicitations of Cornelia, would probably have long before overpowered every feeling of resentment towards Vargas, had they met with the co-operation of his confessor, no less distinguished a person than the Archbishop of Seville, whose friendship for the Marquis had induced him to take upon himself this office. Cornelia was both surprised and shocked at this unusual obduracy in her father's

temper, and the more so as she was ignorant of the counteracting cause. Important public business called the higher dignitaries of the church to Madrid, and, during this period, Cornelia's confessor became also her father's. This good man was a simple unambitious priest, who, acting upon the impression which he had received from the daughter, took every occasion to speak of peace and reconciliation. At length, having sufficiently prepared the Marquis's mind to receive such a charge, he imposed a christian-like forgiveness and reception of Vargas as an atoning penance. The letter which Vargas received was consequently written.

The Marquis de Bohorquia received Vargas as if he had just returned from a journey to Cadiz or Cordova; his salutation was equally common-place

and unimpassioned as it would have been in either case. Cornelia received him as a blind man would recover the blessing of sight, with an almost doubting astonishment, and with unutterable gratitude. His reception by the Marquis surprised him by its unexpected and unimportant character: his reception by Cornelia went to the very bottom of his heart; it opened the flood-gates of his tenderest feelings, and he wept like a child for some time, before he could recover the command of them.

Vargas found that the Archbishop of Seville was still at the court, and likely to be so. He had been appointed by the King to take an active part in some secret negotiation with the Pope, which would probably engage him for a considerable time. The Marquis expected that Vargas

would remain in his house, as had heretofore been the case; but this he refused to do. He felt that it would be at once dishonourable and against his conscience to be living under the roof and upon the bounty of a man, at the moment that he was meditating and attempting to effect what he knew would be considered as a criminal act and a great misfortune. The Marquis was further astonished by Vargas's positive refusal to accept of any pecuniary assistance, without which he conceived it impossible that he could exist; but Vargas told him that, after what had passed, if he were to consent to derive his subsistence from the same kind hand which had supplied him for so long a period of his youth, he should conceive that he took upon himself an obligation of obedience as to his future profession:

and as he distinctly continued his refusal to do this, he as positively declined the proffered support.

This firm resolve of Vargas produced a sullen feeling of anger in the mind of the Marquis, which, though it did not induce him to put an end to all intercourse with his untractable protegé, yet evidently influenced his conduct and manner towards him. Vargas, that he might steadily adhere to his determination, sought some means of supplying himself with the necessaries of life. The success of his former scheme when in England naturally suggested a similar one now that he found himself in a similar situation. The high-raised expectations of the Spaniards at this moment, who already formed calculations upon the undoubted success of the invincible armada, strongly favoured his plan.

The rich merchants of Seville, who had reaped so much advantage from the discovery and conquest of America, were preparing their sickles for the new harvest which their dreams had exhibited to them in the heretic island, and as the advantage of a knowledge of the language was evident, and as such language had not been excommunicated, in spite of the pestilential heresy of which it had been made the organ, Vargas no sooner made known his intention and capability of teaching it, than he had more pupils than he had time to instruct.

I will not trace the progress of his success in the great object of his return to Seville; but it is not surprising that it should have been rapid, and that Cornelia's perfect and sincere conversion should have crowned

his anxious endeavours. Neither is it surprising that his affection should have advanced equally with her faith, nor that his reason should have gradually yielded to the arguments of love and opportunity. The impropriety of robbing his benefactor of his daughter remained the same, but the temptation to it was greater, and his power of opposing that temptation was less. His conviction, that Cornelia's happiness as well as his own required their union, bore down a host of moral reflections, and the recent conduct of the Marquis towards himself was such as very much to lighten the deep shade of guilt under which the action had formerly appeared to him.

The heroism of his virtue having thus yielded to the persevering attacks of human passions and feelings,

it was at last determined between Vargas and Cornelia that they should be secretly united. An obstacle now presented itself which promised to be less surmountable than the self-imposed boundaries of moral principle. They had hitherto been reluctantly forced to maintain the outward appearance of Catholicism, and it was a great object of their marriage to fly together into England, where they might enjoy the free exercise of their religious opinions. The point was first, to overcome their objection to a Catholic marriage; and, secondly, to find a priest to perform it. The first point was a scruple of conscience, which, after an argument for decency's sake, shared the fate of former and more powerful scruples of the same nature. The second it was very difficult to settle. Cornelia's confessor

was a man whom they both thought well of for a Catholic; but Cornelia's utmost endeavours at hypocrisy had not succeeded so far as to prevent suspicions arising in his mind of her indifference as to religion, if not of her unbelief. This had produced an unusual severity in him, which it would be difficult to soften. His connexion with the Marquis too, in consequence of the absence of the Archbishop, must necessarily afford him many opportunities of putting the father upon his guard without breaking the *sigillum confessionis*.

In this dilemma Vargas reluctantly had recourse to a young man, who, having been educated with him at the cathedral school, had lately entered the priesthood. The laxity of his principles, which allowed him to perform the marriage, was the great ob-

jection which Vargas had to be united to Cornelia by his agency; but there was no alternative, and as the young priest unhesitatingly consented to perform the office, Cornelia became the wife of her beloved Vargas.

Vargas was the husband of the woman whom he had so long, so tenderly loved, and yet he was not happy; under the circumstance of their marriage, it was natural that he should have been uneasy and anxious; but in his feelings towards the object of his affection he was not happy. There was an unnatural restraint upon his heart; there was an undefined dread in his mind; terrific, though not tangible, like the phantoms that beset a frightened child in the dark, equally unreal, but equally imposing. His utmost exertions could not throw this off, and he felt the

most unconquerable reluctance to submit his feelings to the test of his reason—he dared not to analyse them, nor trace them to their source.

Cornelia was as far from enjoying the happiness which her glowing imagination had anticipated in a union with Vargas, as the latter was in the possession of her whom he loved. This, however, principally arose from the alteration in her husband, which he in vain endeavoured to hide. Loving him with devotion, her jealous fears suggested a thousand tormenting causes for the forced manner in which the expressions of his affections appeared to be given. Her heart was heavy; the demons of suspicion and jealousy began to attack it, and their happiness appeared in danger of being wrecked, even at its very launching.

Time passed on and no opportunity

occurred of putting their plan of flying to England into execution. In the mean while the undefined feeling that restrained the natural affection of these two hearts, rather increased than diminished in power. The temper of the Marquis became more sour, and his conduct to Vargas more distinctly repulsive. In this miserable situation, Vargas, rather in despair than in hope, proposed to Cornelia that an attempt should be made to procure her father's approbation to their union by making a strong appeal to his heart, and, if necessary, by placing before him the inutility of opposition. Vargas suggested that this should be done through the Archbishop of Seville, now on his return, whose apparent kindness to them, and whose acknowledged influence with the Marquis seemed to

promise both his ready interference and his success in their behalf. Cornelia at first opposed this plan, but habituated to yield to the judgment of Vargas, even before he had acquired the authority of a husband, she at length consented to it, and perhaps the more readily, because she began to be sensible that she was in a situation which must ultimately produce a disclosure of the whole.

CHAPTER X.

By Heaven he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown! Thou dost mean something.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN Vargas and Cornelia had made up their minds to a plan of action, they both experienced less of that fretful restlessness which usually torments those, who, being oppressed by a misfortune, are unable to take any steps towards ameliorating their situation. Their minds had some feasible scheme to rest upon, the uncertain results of which naturally occupied their attention by suggesting possible cases, and contributed there-

fore, in some degree, to awaken the spirit of hope within them.

The Archbishop arrived, and on the very morning after his return Vargas followed him from the grand mass by a communication between the cathedral and the archiepiscopal palace, to which, as a boy, he had been allowed free admittance. At the very door of his closet he approached the prelate sufficiently to attract attention, and he entreated to be honoured with a private audience.

The Archbishop of Seville was a diminutive man, who, by the assistance of three inches of cork placed under his heels, and a mitre disproportionately high, which he bore on his head, contrived to render the outline of his figure more oval and less circular than his natural rotundity of

person might have promised. The mitre also was of very important service in pointing out to those who stood behind him the exact spot where the circle formed by his shoulders touched upon the circle formed by his head; for the latter rose so little above the former, that it might have run a risk of being included in the same outline, if the towering mitre had not marked the projection. His face might have displayed the characteristic good humour of fat persons, if the habit of smiling had not been counteracted by a high conception of the important dignity of his office; and what little cheerfulness did survive the contest with pride, was debased by the evident character of sensuality and animal satisfaction which it bore, and which effectually prevented its being mistaken for the com-

placency of contentedness and of rational happiness.

The Archbishop of Seville had been sub-prior to the monastery of St. Justus when Charles V. retired there upon the abdication of his crowns. The fact of his filling that office in consequence of the Emperor's recommendation at the early age of five and thirty taken together with some trifling corroborative circumstances gave rise to an idea amongst the monks that he was a natural son of Charles's. Whether there were any truth in this opinion or not, his subsequent rapid advancement tended to confirm it; and he took the greatest pains to give a colour to the report, without ever compromising himself by any avowal which might sanction it. He had now carried the archiepiscopal crozier for fifteen years, during which he

had gradually increased in flesh and in pride.

In obedience to an acquiescent look, for his most illustrious Excellency never deigned to bow, Vargas followed him into the closet, and closed the door after him. His embarrassment, however, became extreme; he had never seen the Archbishop since his refusal to enter the priesthood, and his subsequent escape into England. The prelate seemed very much altered in person, but infinitely more so in manner. Instead of the jocose and even familiar mode of accosting Vargas, which had formerly procured the latter so much respect and envy from his class-fellows, his presence now seemed to have banished even the usual dubious smile from the illustrious countenance.

From the silence which followed his entrance, Vargas imagined that the Archbishop had forgotten his person, and he attempted to recall himself to his memory by saying,

" I am the young man whom your most illustrious Excellency honoured some years since with a portion of kind notice, when I was living in the house of the Marquis of Bohorquia."

The Archbishop looked at him for a short time, and then replied—

" Indeed! I took you to be the young fool whom the evil one filled with ingratitude and sin, and took to his special school in England, that he might complete your education."

The little portion of hope with which Vargas entered the room totally fled at this answer; he, however, summoned up courage to say :

" Your illustrious Excellency has been misinformed upon the circumstances of my unhappy history."

" Misinformed have I? Umph! misinformed—very likely indeed. So then you are *not* a heretic? you *have* attended the sacrament of confession every week for the last twelvemonth; you have signs thereof under the mark of your reverend confessor, and parchments setting forth your absolution to boot. You are a minister of the holy Catholic church;—that puffed doublet and befeathered covering are frock and cowl, or cassock and coif at the least! Well, then, holy brother," continued the Archbishop with a malicious irony, " if I am misinformed of the particulars of thy right Catholic history, be pleased to disperse these mists of misinformation—

declare, forthwith, thy true and lamentable legend."

Despair had entered the heart of Vargas at the beginning of this speech, and that demon gradually took entire possession of it as the alternately croaking and squeaking voice of the toad-like creature before him vented its loathsome spite. The command with which his Excellency ended, however, roused him to the necessity of replying to it. He was unprepared with a tale by which he could disprove the accusations which the Archbishop had heaped upon him, and he determined to make an endeavour to soften his heart at once, without paying any attention to them.

Fixing his eyes with a piercing intelligence upon the expecting prelate, Vargas said with a voice full of pathos,

" the Marquis of Bohorquia has a daughter!"

The Archbishop seemed thunderstruck. He suddenly moved himself erect from the lolling position by which he had before filled his throne-like chair. The lids of his small round eyes became distended to admit of an inquisitive and uneasy look at Vargas. A sudden flush mounted to the very rim of his mitre, which had nearly been jerked from his head by the unusual rapidity of his movement. After gazing at Vargas for a minute at least, he resumed his former indifferent manner, his eyelids returned to their natural half-closed situation, and the cushions that surrounded him again received his weight.

Vargas's look, in the mean time, had been more than ordinarily intelligible. A ray of hope had darted across his

mind at the effect which his words had produced. He imagined that he had reached the point of compassion in the Archbishop's breast, and his countenance clearly indicated all the emotions to which such an idea gave rise. The Archbishop was convinced that he had been unnecessarily alarmed, and at the same time he saw with a demon-like joy all the pain that he had it in his power to inflict. The spirit of evil sharpens the intellect, whilst it blunts the feelings, and it pointed out to the delighted soul of the prelate a weapon of torture which he hastened to use. As he resunk into his chair, he repeated in a muttering tone of voice, "yes, the Marquis of Bohorquia has a daughter indeed, and he has a son too."

All the unexpressed terror, the indefinite dread which had haunted Var-

gas ever since his marriage, and which he had been withheld from boldly examining by a confused and cowardly feeling, rushed at these words at once upon his mind, embodied in the dreadful idea that *he* might be that son. It came upon him like a vivid flash of lightning. There was a pause, during which the faint hope of possibility maintained a feeble struggle against the strong power of probability. It was a period like that which intervenes between the lightning flash and the thunder-clap—awful, heart-sickening; and then a torrent of overwhelming ideas came, like the thunder, to drown the last death-cries of his happiness.

With an expression of fire in his countenance which really alarmed the Archbishop, especially as it was accompanied with two or three hasty

advancing strides, Vargas ejaculated the word " son !" and as this produced no explanation from the prelate, he continued in a still louder tone, " What is your meaning? To whom do you allude ?"

With hypocritical pity this arch-demon of an Archbishop proceeded to envenom the suggestions to which he had given rise by the cant of compassion. " Truly, young man, thine ignorance of human nature is lamentable, and in some sort accounts for the general weakness, not to say madness of thy conduct. However, that which evinces thy folly, further sets forth thy charity; and, it were unbecoming my cross, and still more so my crosier, to visit with unrelenting indignation the misgoings of a weak mind, which is not totally perverted. But touching the family of the Mar-

quis de Bohorquia, it would sound ill for my mouth, which has the sacred seal of confession upon its lip, to utter what might seem to reproach that nobleman, or even to betray the domestic secrets which, knowing, I could only know in my holy profession and office; yet hast thou, in truth, grown to an age which must claim the appellation of manhood, without observing that men—men of the world I mean—men not purified by the sanctifying unction of the spiritual calling which thou hast spurned from thee to thy everlasting bane; hast thou not marked, I say, that these worshippers of Mammon waste not their substance upon the offspring of other men?—that they labour not for their neighbour's harvest?—bethink thee, Vargas——."

"Bethink me?—No!" said Vargas, wildly interrupting him, "to

think is to go mad; I have been an idiot, a very idiot; I am a villain—an accursed villain!"

He was about to say more, but the words which were rising to his lips suddenly faded from his memory; the intensity of his feelings had drawn too largely upon his faculties, and overstretched their power. For some time previous, his mind had been like a rudderless vessel, tossed upon the breakers that announced a fearful rock; it had struck and become completely disjointed in the shivering produced by the violence with which it had been propelled.

After gazing in vacant silence for some time upon the Archbishop, Vargas instinctively left the apartment, and with the same impulse, walked across the gardens of the Alcazar, and into the grotto at the end of the Mar-

quis's garden. This spot had become a favourite resort of Cornelia since the interesting scene which had occurred there when she first received the assurance of Vargas's affection. Cornelia was approaching the grotto as Vargas entered it. The sight of her immediately banished the giddy confusion that existed in his brain, and recalled him to a sense of his situation. The idea was so piercingly painful, and the perception of it returned to his mind so suddenly, that he uttered a loud cry, and in the wantonness of despair gave vent in words to that thought, the bare suspicion of which he had before so sedulously avoided—"'Merciful heavens! my sister and my wife!" With this exclamation he retraced his steps, and ran as if he could have escaped from the thought which pursued him.

Cornelia, struck with astonishment, could hardly conceive the idea which the words of Vargas seemed to convey. With a dreadful anticipation, however, she tottered forward to the grotto where, completely overcome by her agitation, she sunk upon the stone seat. There she sat trembling, or rather shivering from head to foot; unable to rise, and sick at heart with the horror of expecting some dreadful, some blasting misfortune. After a considerable time, her loaded heart burst forth in a torrent of tears which continued to flow until she ceased to have the power of controlling them, and they became hysterical and convulsive sobs.

In this state she was found by four alguazils of the Inquisition, who entered by the door from the Alcazar, and, upon seeing their victim extended

at full length upon the bench, took her in their arms without ceremony, and almost without resistance. From the palace of the Alcazar to that of the Inquisition, the ancient Moorish fortress in the Barrio of Triana was a considerable distance; but it was siesta time, an hour as frequently chosen for inquisitorial arrests as the night, and one in which they attracted as little observation. The wretched Cornelia was borne to the latter palace, and delivered over to the jailer of the Inquisition by her silent conductors.

In the mean time Vargas, in a state of frantic agitation, flew from the palace of the Alcazar, through which he passed from its gardens, and, having no object, the impulse of habit led him to the other side of the Guadalquivir, where he had taken up his abode in a small retired house in the

suburb called the Barrio of Triana. His arrival at his lodgings recalled him to himself. He threw himself upon his bed, and, after a violent effort, he wept bitterly. The agony of his mind was in some degree relieved by his tears, and it was still more so by the prayers which he now found himself able to offer up to the throne of mercy. He soon experienced the influence of his devotional feelings in calming the tempest which warred within him, and, after making an ardent but humble appeal to the goodness and mercy of his Creator, he arose with the intention of considering his situation and forming some determination.

Still he found this impossible. What was to be done? Wretchedness, horror, and crime, surrounded him on every side—he could never

see his dear Cornelia again—*his* Cornelia! how dreadful the thought that she was his! Ought he not to have foreseen the discovery which he had now made? ought he not to have imagined it? ought he to have married Cornelia as he had done, even though there were no tie of blood uniting them? This was the chord of torture, and when he touched it, his mind relapsed into his former paroxysm of agony.

From this he was again roused by loud voices in the corrall, or square enclosure before his window. These proceeded from his landlady, who was vehemently disputing with an *arriero*, or mule driver, upon the enormity of the demand which he made for conveying a tall strapping son of her's to Madrid. The *arrieros* offered the only means of travelling to those who

could not afford the expense of posting, and did not possess an animal of their own. They undertook to carry persons from place to place for a certain sum, furnishing them on the road, affording them the protection of their escort, and allowing them a seat upon the top of a mule's burden, which, however, common humanity, strongly aided by the muleteer's instigations, obliged the traveller to vacate, except when he was actually forced by fatigue to add his weight to the animal's load.

In the present instance the woman was sending forth her son *correr mundo*, according to the familiar phrase; that is, to make his way in the world, which was, in fact, nothing more than a convenient manner of disposing of a superfluous son, by turning him out to shift for himself. This custom was at one time popular,

not only amongst the parents, but amongst the boys, in whom the eagerness for present change was more than sufficient to overcome the dread of distant hardship. Vargas's landlady having presented her son with a ducat, a rosary, and her blessing, was further bargaining for the payment of his expenses to Madrid, a most unusual liberality upon such occasions. The good mother did not fail to attack the heart of the arriero by putting this point in the strongest light; neither did the keen muleteer fail to attribute the reduction from his nominal to his reasonable charge to a proper consideration of the maternal generosity. The bargain, however, was not struck without higher words than appeared consistent with the amiable motives which avowedly influenced the parties.

This altercation, having attracted the attention of Vargas, suggested, at

the same time, an immediate means of leaving Seville. As soon as the plan of going to Madrid with this arriero occurred to him, he did not wait to consider of it, but, joining the party in the corrall, he informed them of his intention.

He not only found an unoccupied mule, but he was lucky enough to reap the benefit which his landlady's maternal liberality, or her loud voice, had procured as to the expenses of the journey; for producing from his purse the same sum which, upon inquiry, he found the good woman was rather reluctantly transferring to the palm of the muleteer, he went to seek his valise, without attending to objection or remonstrance. As the money was in fact the reasonable charge, the muleteer having only abated the increase which it was usual to make upon the slender chance of meeting with a

traveller ignorant of the regular fares, little more was said upon the subject, and in half an hour Vargas was on the road to Madrid.

Vargas, with a prudence which he had gained in his straitened circumstances whilst in England, laid by all the money which he could spare during the prosperous period when the invincible armada had held out a prospect that rendered the English language a valuable acquisition. As upon the bursting of that bubble he retained two or three pupils from whom he received enough to enable him to live, he still possessed this fund, which, as he required so little, promised to supply him for a considerable time.

The unhappy Vargas nowhere found rest. He could as easily have fallen asleep upon the rack, or on the pile, as have bid defiance to the unceasing

torments of mind which he endured. Misery impels locomotion. He wandered from place to place until he found himself at Zaragoza. The general bustle and active spirit which prevailed in that city, from various agitating causes, were fortunately adapted to catch his attention. He had acquired a just idea of liberty in England, and had been fond of speculating upon the possibility that his countrymen might throw off the yoke of despotism and bigotry which bowed them down. The lapse of some weeks had rendered the terrific thoughts which had at first beset him less engrossing, and in some degree had fitted his mind for the reception of ideas foreign to the one great subject of his contemplation. His imagination was ardent, and, laying aside the name which he had hitherto borne, he assumed at once the appellation and character of

an Aragonese. He sought at first to lose, for a time, the constant recurrence of his own fate to his mind, by entering into the dispute which was then carrying on between the people of Aragon and their monarch, respecting the right of appointing a foreigner to be their viceroy. This for some time engaged his attention; but the tedious process of political discussion was soon banished by the ever-present remembrance of his misery. He was again falling into apathy and hopeless wretchedness, when Antonio Perez made his appearance at Zaragoza. This interesting event gave him a new impulse. He associated himself with Perez, and attempted to shake off the scorpion from his heart, by applying himself to the interests of his new acquaintance with all the avidity of a ruined gamester.

Having retraced the history of

Vargas thus far, it only remains to explain the reason of his sudden departure from Zaragoza on the day following the tumult in which he had taken so active a part.

The Perico by whom he was informed of Cornelia's imprisonment by the Inquisition, had been for many years a servant of the Marquis of Bohorquia; but having attracted the attention of the Archbishop whilst in his service, that prelate had obtained for him an office under the porter of the palace of the Inquisition at Seville, from which he had gradually risen to the porter's chair itself. My readers will easily have divined that Cornelia was arrested by order of the Archbishop, who repaired to the palace of the Inquisition immediately after that event had taken place. The habitually good-humoured and obsequious face of Perico opening the

great folding doors of the patio might not, perhaps, have attracted the attention of his most Illustrious Excellency, who was accustomed to see it, and who besides most probably had his mind very much pre-occupied at the time. But now Perico's face was neither good-humoured nor obsequious; on the contrary it was melancholy, even to tears, and only respectful. In fact, the good-hearted and grateful man, who had nursed Cornelia as a child, and still considered himself as a retainer of the house of Bohorquia, had just been overpowered by finding that his beloved young mistress had entered the regions where hope, that cometh to all, cometh not.

The action of poor Perico's muscles was so constantly that of hilarity, that it performed the unusual office of expressing grief rather awkwardly, and

still retained a tendency to its ordinary expression which was more calculated to excite mirth than commiseration in those who saw it. The Archbishop might have condescended to smile, but that as a bad conscience is always on the alert and generally very sagacious, the cause of Perico's sorrow flashed at once across his mind, and brought with it a train of all the possible consequences which might result from his sympathy with the prisoner.

Upon entering the closet of the General Inquisitor, the Archbishop took the most effectual means of quieting his fears by requiring the instant imprisonment of Perico. An order to that effect would immediately have been given, had not the General Inquisitor that morning received despatches from his brethren at Zaragoza, in which, amongst other things, the ill conduct and consequent degradation

and punishment of their porter was spoken of, and the loss they were at in the difficulties which surrounded them in Aragon to supply his place with an eligible and trustworthy person. As Perico's conduct had always been irreproachable, the Inquisitor proposed transferring him to the Holy Tribunal at Zaragoza, to which the Archbishop consented, provided his departure took place forthwith. Perico was consequently displaced from his comfortable office in the patio of the palace, and perched upon the back of a stout mule by the side of two prisoners, who, escorted by six men, were to be transferred to the tribunal at Zaragoza. For a long time Perico was at a loss whether he was considered as one of the escort or one of the escorted, and he crossed himself with most unfeigned joy when he found himself again occupying an

equally comfortable birth in the Aljaferia.

Perico, from the little grated hole in the door of the Aljaferia, recognised with astonishment his young master, as he had always called Vargas, on the day on which that fortress was besieged by the populace. He was not so silly, however, as to claim the acquaintance, but contented himself on the following morning with finding him out, which he had no difficulty in doing, as some of the familiars of the Inquisition had traced him to his residence in the discharge of their office. The result of their meeting has been already detailed.

END OF VOL. I.

C. Baldwin, Printer,
New Bridge-street, London.

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3 0112 056535609